WAS CHRIST DIVINE?

WILLIAM W. KINSLEY

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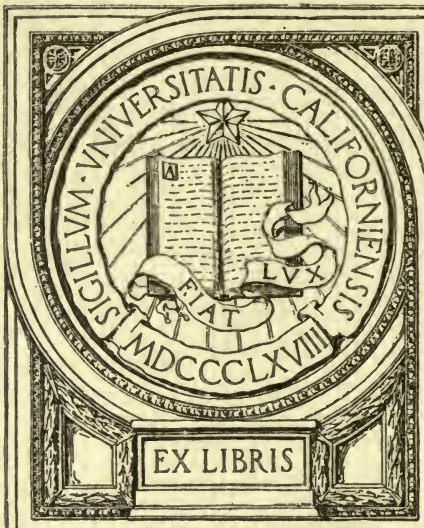

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WAS CHRIST DIVINE?

BY

WILLIAM W. KINSLEY

Author of "Man's Tomorrow," "Does Prayer Avail?"
"Views on Vexed Questions," "Old Faiths
and New Facts," etc.

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PREFACE

The arguments and illustrations, used in answering the questions of "Man's To-morrow" and "Does Prayer Avail?" in the first two volumes of this recent series already issued from the press, are intimately interwoven with those employed in this the third, "Was Christ Divine?" While, however, the three, both in their nature and mode of treatment, constitute together a single unified threefold theme, giving the author's thought in its entirety in a wide and supremely important field of inquiry, yet each will be found complete in itself.

A multitude of most interesting and illuminating facts, facts full of suggestion and inspiration, have been discovered through the researches of the physical sciences and of the science of psychology, bearing directly upon this the third most perplexing of the World's problems, the true nature of the personality of Christ.

With each inflooding of new light there arises a new necessity for a reinvestigation of this baffling mystery. Can our passionate questionings be satisfied? Can the secret be solved?

In place of the half-blinding reverential awe with which the enigma of Christ's personality has been approached thus far there has come in this critical scientific age a spirit of keen scrutiny, a

cool determination to obtain, if possible, some solution that will stand the test of modern thought.

Is there any possible common meeting ground for the hitherto supposed irreconcilable Trinitarian and Unitarian schools of belief? The author would like to have his readers keep this query in mind as they acquaint themselves with the facts and arguments which he has written down with candor and with care.

It has been his fixed determination in instituting this inquiry to champion none but his own independent conclusions reached after a most painstaking study. He has endeavored during his investigations to hold in strict abeyance all his preconceived opinions, his inherited beliefs, and to follow fearlessly the light as far as he has been able to see the light. He does not hold a brief for any established school of thought, for any sect of faith; on the contrary it has long been his fixed determination not to advocate any opinion, however authoritatively affirmed, which he cannot himself fully endorse and defend after mature reflection, as appearing to him reasonable and just. Whether he has arrived at the truth, whether he has been able to shed any new light on this most intricate of themes he is willing to leave to the thoughtful consideration of all who have honest doubts to solve, and who are sincerely seeking to solve them.

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WAS CHRIST DIVINE?

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WAS CHRIST DIVINE?

I

Skeptics of to-day take issue with Christian thinkers, not as to the fact of a historic Christ, but as to his nature, contending that he is nothing more than one of the world's great original geniuses who attained eminence in the department of religious thought, and whose fortune it was to flourish in an age naturally superstitious because antedating scientific inquiry,—an age in which popular reverence enveloped the heads of its heroes in a halo of divine light and taxed the credulity of after-centuries by myths and traditions of their marvelous miracle-working.

They do not hesitate to concede that he was a man of excellent spirit, profound wisdom, exceptionally pure life, that his discourses abound in most praiseworthy sentiment. Neither do they hesitate to affirm that to account him Divine even in any qualified sense is a notion excusable, it may be, in some confiding child-age of the world, awed by mystery and ridden by priests, but ill beseeming the bold, investigating spirit of the twentieth century.

As this opinion widely prevails in learned and especially scientific circles, and is gaining ground so rapidly that we meet it everywhere in books, in the columns of the press, on the platform, and

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in the thoughtful social circle, every earnest truth-seeker feels impelled thoroughly to re-examine this most vital and vexed of all the questions that have come up for settlement, "What think ye of Christ? whose son is he?" and to decide whether the answer given by infidel or Christian best bears the crucial test of modern thought.

We find on reflection that this question naturally resolves itself into these three:

1. Is the human race of sufficient worth to warrant such condescension and sacrifice on God's part as were displayed in Christ?

2. Is such earthly mission absolutely necessary to free man from the guilt of sin and the power of it?

3. Are there in the characteristics and career of Christ convincing evidences that he was that Divine Visitant engaged in this most astounding mission of mercy?

1. Is the human race of such transcendent worth that the great God of the universe, in order to reclaim it from sin, would enter into any exceptionally intimate relationship with a single frail human spirit, identify himself in closest sympathy with its sacrificial life of extremest poverty and humiliation in which it will consent to be scoffed at, traduced, forsaken by friends, and finally put to a cruel and shameful death by the hands of hate?

When we view the vast world-peopled heavens

through the tubes of our telescopes, and reflect that our little earth is but a single grain of sand on the measureless shores of immensity, that the solar system, of which our globe is but a very inconspicuous member, is only one of millions of similar systems that compose the Galaxy or Milky Way whose luminous band encircles the heavens; and that this mighty nebula is but one out of thousands of sun-clusters already uncovered by the searching eye of science, we are overwhelmed with the vastness of God's plans and cares, and instinctively feel that it would be the height of presumption to suppose that he has given any special attention to the welfare of this single race of beings that inhabit this little satellite, much more that he has entered into close sympathetic union with a member of an obscure peasant family of Jews, who permitted himself to be despised, afflicted, and smitten of men.

If we confine our minds to these lines of thought solely, the upas tree of unbelief will soon cast its baleful shadow over us. But, happily, science has carried the torch of knowledge far down the corridors of forgotten time and disclosed a well-nigh infinite patience and painstaking on the part of the Almighty in incarnating right here, by successive acts of creation, his conception of life. The earth is small indeed, being twelve hundred thousand times less in bulk than the sun it circles. But the micro-

scope tells us that God does not need vast stellar spaces and ponderous masses of matter in which to work his wonders; that he can embody his choicest thoughts, as readily within the infinitesimal boundaries of atoms as within the wide circumferences of suns; that with him bulk or avoirdupois is not the unit of worth; that the germ-force lodged inside every minute sphere of fish-spawn exhibits in its work the same Divine depths of wisdom and perfection of skill that characterize the operations of those mighty organizing forces that convert amorphic vapor-banks into million-sphered sun-clusters. The spectroscope tells us that other worlds are constituted like our own, that processes of planet-making are still going on, and that marks of incompleteness and evidences of continued evolution are clearly traceable; and the idea naturally suggests itself that it is by no means improbable that many yet incomplete and uninhabited worlds are to be peopled from this very globe of ours. Certain it is, through the gates of death have passed out somewhere, age after age, countless multitudes of disembodied spirits; and who can tell when this mysterious procession of thronging souls shall cease to come and go across this narrow stage of being? For aught we know, earth is the nursery of the universe, the great training-school of the stars.

The very scientists who decry Christianity have by their researches unwittingly so exalted

our conceptions of man's place in Nature as to silence all questioning whether, in order to effect his salvation, God would consent to such a sacrifice as that claimed, provided this end could in no other way be secured. Most abundant and convincing evidences have been unearthed of the fact that God, after hundreds of thousands of years of patient progressive work, reached in man the full and final expression, the *ultima Thule*, of creative thought on this planet.

Would that somehow we might be lifted in contemplation to some far height, where with sweeping glance we could note as mapped out beneath us over the populous periods of the past those majestic outlines of Divine purpose which found in man, in his gifts and destiny, its long-awaited consummation!

In our geological researches we find that God revealed almost at the outset his full ground-plan of vital organization, the fossil records of the rocks declaring that mollusks, radiates, articulates, and vertebrates—the four cardinal characteristics, the set patterns after which all bodily forms have since been built—appeared on the earth nearly at the same epoch; and the fact that around these primal conceptions all other creative thoughts have clustered and have served simply to unfold their well-nigh inexhaustible possibilities of adaptation to the demands of an ever-varying environment; and the further fact that not one of them has fallen into disuse, but

is as distinct and dominant to-day as at their first appearing, that they have survived all changes, withstood climates and cataclysms, have neither increased nor diminished, were clearly marked at the first, are clearly marked now—may be taken as a sure token that God's ultimate purpose as to the framework of living organisms has been reached.

After the highest, most complex of these four types—the vertebrates—the human body has been fashioned, and in this sub-kingdom it ranks among the *Mammalia*, the highest of the five classes, and in this class among the *Primates*, the highest of the twelve orders, being considered by scientists the last term of an organic series. And it not only far surpasses all other organisms as a physical instrument of the mind, but bears upon it such marks of Divine completeness, such absolute competency to perform the most complicated and the most exalted tasks to which pieces of mechanism can possibly be assigned, that we may safely affirm that in it the full Divine ideal has been attained.

Let us consider this a little in detail. Hugh Miller has called attention to the fact that in man alone the body assumes an ideal position. No other vertebrate stands erect. Between the horizontal fish and the partially stooping ape spinal columns may be found at every degree of the quadrant.

In organs of sense-perception and in powers

of manipulation man's body furnishes to his intellect an equipment so admirable in its completeness that nothing further can reasonably be desired or can be used to advantage, and in the well-nigh universal range of its capacities is immeasurably superior to that of any other animal. It is true that a dog's scent, a gorilla's hand, an eagle's eye, a horse's neck, in some points surpass our own. Many animals have been better clad by Nature for warmth and beauty than we, have more impenetrable armor, sharper claws and teeth, easier and swifter locomotion, greater powers of endurance. Many have their limbs terminated in most cunningly fashioned tools, which from the first they know precisely how to use most effectively. But though we can point to this one or that which in some respects has an organ more perfect, or more perfectly under control, yet through the sovereignty of our intellects, through their power of inventive and adaptive thought, we are able to bring our bodies into such development and training, and to fashion and place in our hands such tools, and so to supplement our organs by those of the animals below us, which we domesticate, and also so to utilize Nature's forces, that our minds have at last at their disposal the acutest senses and the strongest muscles in the world. We make our own the scent of the dog, the wing power of the bird, the strength of the horse, the sight of the cat, the instinct of the bee.

The camel, that living ship of the desert, with its great store of fat on its back, thick sole on its foot, long lash of its eye, its self-closing nostril, capacious honeycombed water-bags, wondrously acute sight and smell, its almost exhaustless endurance of muscular fiber, is especially fitted to withstand the privations and the blinding, suffocating siroccos of the desert. Man has long since so thoroughly domesticated the only two known species of this animal that not a single individual now exists in a wild state. It has become so emphatically the servant of man that the earth's widest sand-wastes have been turned into highways of commerce, across which richly laden caravans are constantly threading their way.

We not only develop our own organs into marvelous capacity by patient training and supplement them by appropriating those of the brutes, but we vastly multiply their original resources by ingenious seizure of Nature's elemental forces, so that we speak with telephones, look through the tubes of great refractors, add to our detective sense of taste and touch and smell by chemical tests, multiply our muscular powers by applying steam, wind, electric energies, until we can lift mountains, walk over seas or under them, send our voices across continents, transport our bodies to the clouds or burrow them thousands of feet under ground, brave the suns of tropics and the frozen breath of arctic zones. From the shorn lamb's fleece and the

worm's spun shroud we weave our woolen and silken fabrics. The furry skins of the seal and the otter and the mink protect our hairless backs, the brilliant feathers of birds grace our persons, the skilled industries of all the instinct-guided creatures below us contribute to the cheer and beauty of our homes. Were our bodies more fully equipped, our minds would have less stimulus for development. Just enough of bodily endowment has been granted to show us what we lack and how to get it, to create in us a desire and a purpose to add to our store, the effect being not to discourage, but to awaken and incite. No animal has any natural bodily advantage that is not in our reach to acquire or use so that all the marvelous gifts of all the species of sentient life we have a right to regard as parts of our own fleshly furnishings, and we have reason to believe that for the housing of the human mind all Nature has been commissioned by the Almighty to pay bountiful tribute. In this element of universality lie the insignia of royalty. The bee steps out from its cradle most admirably equipped with tools for a specified work and with all the unerring skill of an expert, but its sphere is an extremely narrow one. It has no reaching out of desire or of power, except for the smallest part of this broad heritage. To drink from the nectar cup of flowers, to fill its pollen baskets and wax pouches, to build its cells and store them with honey or eggs—these are to it the sum total

of life, its utmost longing, its unchangeable destiny. So with every other one of God's creatures. In marked contrast to man, most circumscribed spheres and subordinate positions are assigned them.

Furthermore, man's bodily organs, even when taken apart by themselves, unsupplemented, are, if considered each in the entirety of its powers, in its flexibility and range, immeasurably superior to those of all other animals, even the most gifted.

Man's hand, which is far in the lead of all his other organs as a serviceable implement of the mind, though in general structure and characteristics resembling that of the ape or of the lemuroid, is vastly superior as to both the variety, delicacy, precision, and swiftness of its movements. Only man's hand is fully and permanently lifted from the ground, and relieved from the task of assisting in locomotion and support—tasks which greatly tend to lessen its suppleness and to blunt its finer sensibilities. It alone can with readiness oppose the thumb to the fingers for the purposes of seizure, or is capable of pronation and supination—that is, of so rolling itself that the back or the palm shall at will lie uppermost. The gorilla's hand has greater grasping power, but in this its superiority ceases; for, being designed only for coarse and menial offices, as the servant of a sluggish, shallow, and wholly brutish mind, every finer

quality either was at the first denied it, or has through neglect been long since withdrawn.

It is in the hand that our sense of touch is most acute. We feel by means of papillæ,—rod-like bodies about one-hundreth of an inch long, coming up out of the lowest part of the cuticle, and composed of nerves, blood-vessels, and fibrous tissue—and it is right at the tips of our fingers that these are the most abundant, though they may be found scattered everywhere over the surface of the body, and the extent to which the revealing power of the fingers through this sense has been carried by careful culture may well fill us with most profound amazement. Experts among the world's workers sometimes seem gifted with magical insight. The silk throwsters of Bengal, for instance, can by touch alone distinguish twenty different degrees of fineness in cocoons, even before they are unwound. The achievements of the blind, who have been forced to make their fingers supply in part their loss of sight, show us how limitless are our possibilities in this direction, for they have gone so far as to determine even differences of color, so we are informed by Dr. Kitto in his work on The Lost Senses. This expertness is attained by constantly recalling former experiences, instituting comparisons, and completely absorbing the attention. Dr. William B. Carpenter assures us that we can by persistently willing it increase the flow of the nourishing blood to any point in

the body, and thereby perceptibly increase the vigor and activity, and promote the growth, of any organ or sense. Even minute papillæ can thus be reached and rendered more effective. Indeed, no limit has yet been found to their attainment when the capacious, aspiring, dominant mind insists upon increased facilities of outlook. The body is under the plastic power of the mind far more than we are apt to think. How the musician adds by patient drill to the strength, celerity, and precision of his finger touch! His hands at last fly over the keyboard of the piano like fairy sprites, executing with lightning speed and delicate nicety the most difficult commands of their master. He has, it is true, found one impediment in the way of the perfection of his art, but he has also found that that impediment can be removed by the skill of the surgeon. There is a certain cord, a relic from our brute ancestry, so scientists tell us, that partially binds the third finger. The lancet sets it free.

It is deeply interesting to note the various partial embodiments of the Divine ideal in this portion of the body's furnishing, to see in how many ways the hand may be modified to suit the different needs of different modes of life, answering as a paddle to the whale, its digits without claws or nails being so connected and covered with integument as to have their individuality well-nigh obscured; serving as a wing to the bat, its elongated fingers glued fast to broad pieces

of skin to be spread or furled at the pleasure of this little flying mouse; or serving as a grasping hook to the sloth, with which to hang in mid-air hour after hour from some branch in its forest home, its slender fingers, lying side by side, always curved and ending in curved claws; or, still further, being used as a nut-pick by the aye-aye, with its single bony finger stretched out to a seemingly abnormal length.

But, while we note how each brute's hand is admirably fitted for some specific work, we note also how specific that work is, how extremely limited the sphere of action, how forever precluded, by the peculiarity of its structure and the hopelessly menial character of its tasks, from any further enlargement or refinement of power. As we study the achievements of the human hand, and observe how the human mind can, seemingly without limit, multiply and exalt its powers, we feel warranted in regarding this most wonderful combination of bone and horny plate, muscle and tendon and cartilage, ligament, cuticle, blood-vessel, and nerve fiber, as the final and full embodiment of God's ideal, as in this direction the *ultima Thule* of his thought.

This is equally true of the mind's other fleshly furnishings. Anatomists astonish us with the statement that, in providing a window through which man may look out on earth and sky, there has been effected a combination of eight hundred different complemental contrivances. The

structure of the eye is essentially the same in all the mammalian genera. There are, it is true, some animals of peculiar needs which have had their eyes correspondingly modified. Amphibious mammals, as the whale and seal, have eyes built, like the fish, without tear glands, with spherical lenses, and with thickened rear walls for pushing forward the retinæ, and thus securing great refractive and microscopic power, in order that they may thus more readily find their way and procure their food in the dense salt seas.

In some genera the shape of the pupil is varied, and in some the eye's interior chamber, instead of being painted black, fitted for absorbing light, is covered with a pigment of brilliant metallic luster, fitted for reflecting it on the retina, and thus rendering it possible for the animal to see and seize its prey in the darkest hours of night. The birds, a lower order of creation, have eyes which, to suit the demands of swifter locomotion, can adjust the focus for different distances more rapidly than mammals. They also have a third eyelid, which, when not in use, lies folded at the inner corner, ready to be spread by two little muscles which have it in charge, like a thin gauze veil, to temper the sun's glare, which otherwise would blind them. Insects' eyes are made stationary; and to enable these Lilliputians to see in every direction, each one has been furnished with two clusters, each cluster numbering, in some cases, as of the beetles, as high as twenty thou-

sand, each eye set in different directions, and having a separate optic nerve, lens, iris, and pupil. But these variations are simply offsets to disadvantages belonging to the habitat, or ways of making good some defect inherent in the eye itself. Man's eye, with its power to roll in the socket, lubricate the parts, enlarge the pupil, adjust the focus, and avoid spherical aberration, seems to lack in nothing essential to perfect vision. It has power to see a particle measuring but one five-hundreth of an inch on a side, and a thread but one forty-nine hundreth of an inch in thickness. Whatever its limitations and defects, the mind has found it quite possible to fully make them good, not only by artificial aids, the results of its ingenious contriving, but by sheer force of will, compelling the blood to strengthen it and enlarge its varied parts, as already alluded to. But, more especially, it can, by rigidly fixing the attention, constantly striving after closer observation, cultivating its æsthetic tastes, contrasting and comparing, finally, in a most marked degree, increase the sensitiveness of the retina so that the most delicate lines in the sunbeam-painted pictures shall stand out distinctly without blur or defacement, and the impression in all its fullness shall be carried over the optic nerve to the brain. Just here lies the eye's chief capacity for improvement and enlargement of power, and, as in the case of the hand, there has yet been found no

limit to the mind's plastic influence over it. The experiences of artisans and artists and star-gazers, and all trained observers, abundantly corroborate this statement.

Very few of the objects that come within the brute's range of vision ever make an impression on the brute's brain. No cognizance is taken. Sunbeams may paint their pictures never so deftly, they fade unnoticed from the canvas. Here has been provided an apparatus whose possibilities of achievement lay all undiscovered until the advent of man, and that too of the most gifted and cultured man,—possibilities which are still unexhausted and even undetermined, notwithstanding so many centuries of civilization. There is certainly every indication that God here contemplates no improvement which use can not develop, that he has given to this organ its stamp of Divine completeness.

The human ear is a marvel and a mystery—a marvel in the scope and perfection of its interpretative power, a mystery in the modes of its working. Scientists with all their tireless research confess that in many very important particulars it still baffles their efforts to unlock its secrets. The anatomist, with his dissecting knife, his microscope, his chemical tests, his delicate scales, and his minute measuring lines, has been enabled to present to us a passably clear conception of the different parts of this piece of matchless mechanism. With his help we

note first the auricle, or outer ear, with its peculiarly grooved frame-work of cartilage to serve as a sounding board. The pulses of the air, we find, are gathered and guided by this into a narrow, winding passage, called the auditory canal, along which they beat until they strike the membrane of the tympanum. Behind this lies a little chamber, known as the middle ear, across which is hung an irregular chain of bones —the first link shaped like a mallet, the second like an anvil, the third as round and small as the head of a pin, the fourth bearing the familiar form of a stirrup. These are supposed, though not known, to carry along their line the vibratory movements of the tympanic membrane to the inner ear, in which lie peripheral end-organs of the minutely subdivided auditory nerve. Here, in this so-called labyrinth, are the vestibule, the semicircular canals, and the cochlea. Here the outer world's messages of sound are in some mysterious way sent flashing over the wires until they end in molecular changes of the brain.

There are three characteristics of musical sounds which by this instrument we are able to distinguish—the pitch, the intensity, and the timbre of the tone. In what this last consists, in the determining of which the other two play no part, or in what way it is communicated, are matters of still grave dispute. But what puzzles scientists most, and piques their curiosity, is the ear's achievement of taking in and communicat-

ing not only melody, but harmony of sound, and at the same time keeping separate the individual notes which are used in each combination. Whether the fibers which are stretched across the central coat of the membrane of the tympanum, and radiate from the attached handle of the mallet bone, can, by means of their difference in length, size, and tension, sympathetically respond to the different waves of sound, or whether the three thousand rods of the organs of Corti to be found floating in the fluid that fills the winding chambers of the cochlea constitute a keyboard to answer the air wave's finger touch; or whether the end is attained through some yet undiscovered process,—is a matter still to be determined.

We have by our training brought this wonderful instrument to such a degree of perfection that we have succeeded in taking cognizance of sounds so low as to be formed from as few as thirty vibrations per second, and so high as to come from as many as thirty thousand, so flexible is it, so capable of enlargement of capacity, so responsive to the behests of the aggressive human will behind it. Practical musicians have at last reached such keen discrimination that they perceive a difference of pitch amounting to no more than one sixty-fourth of a semitone. Does it not seem that in this bodily sense also, as in the others considered, the Creator's grand ideal has been fully realized?

Our olfactory nerves, though in some cases less acute than those of brutes, are evidently of far wider range and suited to and designed for nobler service, being something more than grimly utilitarian, to be employed as aids in procuring and selecting food, and in sounding alarm when dangers impend. These sets of nerves in man not only subserve these lower ends, but are also sources of exquisite pleasure and æsthetic refinement, and enter in as most important factors in the great scheme of the world's intellectual development. The arts and sciences, with rarely an exception, place them under tribute. We gain some conception of the well-nigh preternatural sensitiveness of the ends of these minute nerve-fibers, as well as of the almost infinite divisibility of matter, when we reflect that one one-thousandth of a milligramme of mercaptan when mixed with two hundred and thirty cubic metres of air give out an odor clearly perceptible to us. The scientists, who recently demonstrated this fact by experiment, estimate that it is only one fourteen hundred and sixty millionth part of a milligramme of this substance that comes in contact with the nerves of the nose at any one time, yet they can detect its presence. But the fact that it lies within reach of the human will to indefinitely increase the range and power of this interpretative organ should be especially noted, for in it lies the revelation that upon this subtile sense also has been affixed the seal of Divine completeness.

Had we space we might cite analogous facts pertaining to our powers of taste.

That which has been found true with reference to those gifts of body that disclose what lies without, that unlock the doors opening into Nature's vast arcana, may be equally affirmed of those that reveal what lies within, such as articulate speech, facial expression, gestures and pose of body, and peculiarities of gait and intonations of voice. Our bodies have here very marked original versatility of utterance, far transcending the bodies of brutes. Indeed, they have been utterly denied articulate speech, and laughter and tears and the tell-tale blush that mantles brow and cheek. For proofs of the almost limitless plastic power of the will over these thought-transmitting capacities of the body we have the confessions of noted conversationalists and orators and actors and rapture-thrilling vocalists, disclosing to us how, through persistent, painstaking drill, they have finally attained this their most wonderfully complete mastery.

Wallace, speaking of the power, range, flexibility, and sweetness of the musical sounds producible by the human larynx, adds that the habits of savages give no indication of how this faculty could have been developed, as the singing of savages is a more or less monotonous howling, and the females seldom sing at all. It seems as if the organ had been prepared in anticipation of the future progress of man, since it contains

latent capacities which are useless to him in his earlier condition.

Actors, to render more certain and telling their triumphs by kindling the imaginations of their audiences, surround themselves with the accessories of stage scenery; and for the voice of the singer the sounding pipes of the organ, and the notes of all manner of metal and reed and stringed instruments, are called in as accompaniments, though that voice soars over all in the grand crescendo passages of the hallelujah chorus.

And then, too, what charm of form, grace of motion, delicate tint and rapturous glow of beauty are reached at times by these gifted organized bodies of living dust! To add still further to the inherent powers of fascination of the body, the restless spirit that dwells within it, and seeks through it æsthetic expression, decks it with flowers and plumes, gems and gold, and dyed garments of gracefully flowing folds, and, when possible, places it within a marble palace where electrically lighted apartments are rendered rich with works of decorative art!

But the foremost of all the organs of the human body—that which lifts man, as to all other orders of creation, into unapproachable pre-eminence—is the brain, whose massive lobes of convoluted gray matter constitute, as is supposed, the seat of the soul. It certainly is the central office from which radiates that com-

plicated system of nerve lines over which are ever flashing night and day, waking and sleeping, telegrams of conscious and unconscious thought. The brain of the fish bears an average proportion to its spine of not more than two to one; of the reptile, two and a half to one; of the bird, three to one; of the mammal, four to one; while that of man bears an average of twenty-three to one. What a leap! How significant! Here surely is a great gulf fixed. Man is thus at a single bound placed at an almost infinite remove from all sentient life about him in point of thought capacity; and in the already completed centuries of his history he has shown that while there are some resemblances, there are not only vastly increased mental acumen and breadth, but also absolutely radical differences of mental structure; for while with the lower animals instinct is at the front; with man, reason, the insect and the brute following blindly a course marked out by another, man deliberately determining on a course for himself. While one is confined to a narrow sphere and to temporary dominion, having no desire for or prospect of progress, the other, ever restless and dissatisfied at his present status, is driven on by an insatiable longing from conquest to conquest until to every thoughtful student of individual and national history comes the grand conception that man has been created for universal dominion and for endless growth; that he was the long-expected guest toward whom

all the prophecies in Nature have been pointing through the long geologic ages, that into his hands have been intrusted all the wonder-working forces with which Nature abounds, the keys that unlock all the secret storehouses of material wealth, the art galleries, the conservatories of music, all the treasuries of suggestive thought. Surely it was for him, who has shown himself capable of utilizing her riches, developing her possibilities, perfecting her incompleteness, training her forces, interpreting her hieroglyphs written on rock and sky, on sea and land, this wide world of wonders was being molded by the Creative Hand. It was for man the crystalline forces in some long ago gathered the sediment of the primal seas into rock quarries and salt beds, the vegetative forces produced the dense conifer growths of the carboniferous era and volcanic fires buried and baked them into beds of coal. For him the waters swarmed with fish, the fields were white with cotton, the long-fibered fleece grew on the back of the sheep, even the lowly worm spun and wove its silken shroud, the forest oak buried its great roots in the soil, threw out its banners of leaves, and with its mighty arms grappled with the fierce storms of centuries in order that he might from its tough and sinewy stem fashion ribs for his ships and build a sheltering home for his little ones.

The fact that the earth had for ages been a vast reservoir of minerals lying idle till man's

advent, and that those qualities which render them fusible, malleable, ductile, soluble, sealed secrets to all but him, have rendered them through his inventions conducive to his comfort and culture, is proof positive that it was for these very ends of use and for this very being of marvelous gifts that God fashioned them at the first.

The fact that electricity—which for ages simply hung across the northern skies its mysterious banners of light and now and then crashed down from the clouds in death-dealing thunderbolts—now, man's tamed Titan, lights the streets of his cities, his workshops and his marble halls, drives his machinery, draws his carriages, and flashes his thought over the everywhere interlacing telegraphic highways of modern life, is proof positive that it was for these very ends of use and for this wondrous being that God fashioned at the first this most astonishing of all the forms of elemental force.

The fact that man has shown himself capable, by following out the suggestions of Nature, of becoming a sort of sub-creator, a finisher of God's work, developing new and improved varieties of fruit and vegetables and exercising a plastic power even in the charmed circle of animal life, reclaiming the desert and morass, adding new tints to the rose, new lines of symmetry to the tree, new grace of curve to the river, new and fuller combination of charms to the landscape

beauties with which earth abounds, is proof positive that it was in anticipation of man's coming that God left his work thus incomplete, and that it is to man's hand God at the first determined to entrust the finishing.

The fact that man has proved himself able to thrive in all climes, on all foods, to build for himself homes out of all materials, to make the whole world his habitat, all animal species, all kinds of force, his docile household servants, his winged messengers, clothiers, purveyors, architects, even artists, and, when occasion fits, his grand orchestral choir, is proof positive that it was preeminently for man that God thus exercised his almost infinitely provident thought on this planet.

The fact that man is thus a microcosm, all types of living organisms centering in him and becoming perfected; that he is fast reaching universal sovereignty through his ever-widening knowledge, stretching out his scepter over the three great kingdoms of the world—the mineral, the vegetable, and the animal—and leaving the imprint of his personality everywhere; that he is the great, the only cosmopolite at home on sand wastes or on tossing seas, in sheltered nooks or wind-swept mountain summits, under blazing equatorial skies or amid the brooding stillness and desolation of the land of the iceberg and the creeping glacier; that he can by a plastic, an almost creative touch round out the

partially finished designs of Nature into full completeness; that he can hold converse through Nature with Nature's God, interpreting the thoughts embodied in earth's phenomena, deciphering the handwriting on the leaves of the rock records of vast geologic periods, and thus tracing the ongoing and noting the trend of the Divine purposes as from age to age they have found embodiment, and discovering in this history of earth's evolution evidences of the soundness of his own scientific classifications and thereby the striking likeness of his own thought to that of the Divine, threading his way through the labyrinthine mazes of the star-peopled heavens, determining the mechanism of the universe, calculating eclipses, weighing and analyzing suns; the fact that he can thus, through his susceptibilities, his faculties of memory, of perception, of reasoning, of conceptive imagination, transmute into a populous world of thought within, this populous world of fact without, furnishes proof positive that it was for this very end of use, the surrounding of man's spirit with a fitting environment, this planet has under the creative and directive power of God been undergoing processes of evolution that extend back over a period so vastly remote that it completely transcends our utmost reach of thought.

When we contemplate how inconceivably many have been the centuries consumed by God in his patient painstaking preparation for man's com-

ing, what astounding riches of invention he has lavished upon it, what mighty and subtile secondary causes have been commissioned to forward the work, when with the help of science we trace the mighty evolution of the ages and learn at last that man is the grand goal of creative purpose, the supreme consummation, the *ultima Thule* of Divine thought on this planet, how strikingly inadequate seem to us all the current estimates placed upon human life and human destiny!

And yet I have directed attention only to the less important of God's preparations for man's coming and to the less valuable of his bestowments upon this most favored child of his choice. To this complicate world-environment, to this subtile, organized body, to this interpretative and scepter-winning faculty of deliberative thought, were added what far transcend them all and to which they were evidently designed but as accessories—the gifts of moral discernment and of responsible free choice. From their exercise, character—that which lifts us from brute being into Divine likeness—is finally evolved. This, from the very nature of the case, God could not directly create, but that this was a consummation which ever lay uppermost in all his thought through all the ages, to which he made every other consideration bend, there is now no shadow of doubt. His entire endeavor was directed to the making ready the conditions out of which

character might be the final fruitage. To this end he not only bestowed upon man this gift of sovereignty, of absolute freedom of choice, and gave him capacity for moral motive and for judicial insight, but he absolutely atmosphered him with multiform disciplinary influences, and to this end established as a universal law of life growth from germs through struggle. As I have elsewhere, in a paper entitled Satan Anticipated,* described at length the operations of this law, I will here only briefly outline the workings of this perhaps the most marvelous and deeply laid of all the plans of God.

We note that plant life has germinal beginnings and a history of development, and the vegetative force, in its efforts to embody in material organic form the ideal given it, finds itself confronted at every step of the way by persistently opposing forces with which it has to strenuously and successfully contend or be itself defeated. It meets the force of gravity at the very outset of its career and lifts its masses of matter, in some instances amounting to several tons, right against the steady antagonism of that force. It wrestles with the winds again and again, every contest resulting in tightening its fibered stem. It is compelled to tear asunder atoms which chemical forces are holding together with all their might, to actually drag these forces into its service and to fight unremittingly their

* In Views on Vexed Questions.

disintegrating tendencies, re-enforced as they often are with the weakening depredations of hungry parasites, until worn out with the struggle it at last succumbs and disappears forever, leaving its palace of wonders to become shapeless and drifting dust again.

Those mysteriously commissioned forces that build up and maintain animal organisms have closely corresponding battle histories ending at last in corresponding fatal defeats. These histories are made up of like rendings asunder of chemical compounds, impressment into service of unwilling chemic forces, fierce fights with swarming parasitic foes, and at last the like endless leaden sleep of death.

This was God's established order long before sin came. Man's moral fall has unquestionably multiplied diseases and hastened death, but it cannot be charged with having first introduced them to this sorrow-burdened earth. Long before Adam there were sand wastes and pitfalls and cyclones and thunderbursts and poisonous airs and ravenous beasts. Bodies were made of perishable clay and environed with adverse influences. Life would have been a fierce contest even if sin had never come. Rare indeed are the paradisiacal spots where fruits grow with luxuriant spontaneity, where the air is soft and odor-laden, where the rays of the sun are always tempered and golden and full of balm, where the life of the flesh is a careless, cloudless holiday. Even

if sin had not come, disease would have paled the cheeks of loved ones and home circles would not have been without some vacant chairs. Anxieties, forebodings, care-burdens, disappointed hopes, scalding tears would have been accompaniments of human life even if that life had been kept pure. This world as now constituted was evidently designed as a means not an end, as disciplinary and developing, as a great training school for some higher form of existence.

If death ends all, this present order of Nature, however full of matchless mechanism, of astounding achievement, however stamped with profoundest inventive thought, may be rightly counted a most lamentable failure; but if God designed this life and this world as means for developing virtue, the present order of things is not only a marked success, but it takes on new and deeper meanings, it displays on God's part an infinitely greater care-taking than scientists have as yet discovered in all their investigations.

Virtue being beyond the range of God's creative power, being the result of the choices of a responsibly free will, as we have already stated, God was necessitated from the very nature of the case to pass man through some probationary period, make him amenable to systems of law, place him inside a body easily deranged, full of appetites and passions and desires, susceptible of over-indulgence, place him amid opportunities for gratification left open to abuse that thereby

he might learn self-mastery, amid dangers to prove and develop his courage, amid trials and disappointments to test his fortitude, and objects of need to appeal to his better sympathies, amid hindrances by the surmounting of which to toughen the fiber of his spirit, to make him nobly, grandly aggressive.

This preparation of untold centuries to ensure a suitable habitat and housing for human souls, this well-nigh infinite painstaking and deliberate incurring of most fearful risks to school those souls into virtue, give us some intimation of God's high estimate of the possibilities of spiritual attainment concealed within these yet closely folded buds of promise. When we contemplate the great mass of mankind, study the dark history of the ages, when we realize to our thought how that myriads in every generation have come and gone revealing only narrow, sluggish, brutish minds, the slaves of appetite, victims of multiform tyrannizing forces, cowed by superstitious fears and consumed by greed, we are apt in our haste despairingly to conclude that the risks were too great and have proved fatal. But a more thoughtful study will convince us that the race is surely moving toward light and love. It sometimes seems very strange to us that God saw fit to wait through vast geologic periods for his delegated mechanic and chemic forces to convert a shapeless bank of cosmic vapor into a planet fit for peopling, then to wait through other

periods still, whose lengthened lapse we have no means of measuring, for earth in its physical features and in its lower sentient life to become a place habitable to man. Had he so chosen he could have called this globe into being in all the perfection of its latest age by the instant flash of his thought. All we can say is, he preferred to wait, and to wait long. Think you his patience tires as the slow centuries of human progress wear away, that his courage fails, that his hope is growing dim? He knows how long he can afford to wait. A thousand years in his sight are but as yesterday when it is past and as a watch in the night.

But we anxiously ask what becomes of those countless throngs of sin-distorted souls which hear death's summons unprepared and pass within the shadow. This much I think we can safely say: not until God has fully compassed the resources of his infinite love to win back the erring and has finally lost all hope of their return will his striving cease and his sustaining presence be withdrawn. Yet when the last ray of hope is quenched in the great yearning heart of God, then, but not till then, will the hardened ingrate rebel be forever banished from his presence. That men, if they choose, can, despite all God's striving, sink down to devils we must concede, and also that at the last this appalling fate of banishment so long impending, prophesied in the immutable laws of life as well as in God's written

revelation, may become at last the dreaded doom of devils.

But again we tremblingly inquire what is to be the future of those who before death have indeed become repentant and believing and had aspirations after better things and yet have been summoned hence while passing through perhaps the very first stages of moral development, or at best before discipline has ripened their powers or unfolded and confirmed their virtues. It can not be that their growth is thus arrested and they thus doomed to remain forever incomplete, yet further development can be effected only under disciplinary agencies similar to those now at work in this world.

"Heaven is not reached at a single bound;
But we build the ladder on which we rise
From the lowly earth to the vaulted skies,
And we mount to its summit round by round."

Where they are to finish their training is not revealed, and it is of little moment inasmuch as the further atmosphering of these souls must remain essentially the same. Every human spirit comes gifted with a divine ideal to grow to and germinal impulses for growing, and he who made and gave will supply the environment of implements and influences and afford the time requisite for the full fashioning, even though centuries or millenniums must be consumed in opening those closely folded buds of promise into bloom. Not

those who through life have been fortune's apparent favorites, who have escaped the baptism of fire, who never, or rarely, have had their manhood tried, should be tendered our congratulations, but rather those battle-scarred heroes who have come up through much tribulation, for "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," as only such can yet possibly be prepared to enter through the gates into the city.

Have we been left to vague conjecture as to the nature and extent of each spirit-germ's Divine commission, as to what, if any, are the impassable barriers to its capacities for growing, or has there appeared in the centuries a Shining One in the serene majesty of whose perfect consecration we find brought out at last in its completeness the grand ideal God has set and made possible for each created soul to grow to under the uplifting power of his presence? It is now universally conceded that there has visited the earth a personage called Christ, and that, whatever else he was, he was a created human soul, housed in a human body, hemmed in by all the ordinary human limitations, and rising at the last to no greater height of moral excellence than is possible to be attained by any of his disciples. The Sacred Record assures us that he was tempted in all points as we are. The same sustaining grace given him is offered us. To the same sublime height of loving self-sacrifice which he reached we may climb, for in the words of the command,

"Love one another as I have loved you," there is the promise of the power. But to reach this fullness of Christ's stature will doubtless require on the part of most a longer schooling than this short life can give. But the schooling will certainly come. Full opportunity will be afforded. We are the sons of God, joint heirs with Christ. So far, then, as we can picture in our thought this transcendent personage whose life and teachings have stood the test of the world's keenest scrutiny for now nearly two thousand years, so far we can conceive what we, if lovingly obedient, are, under the molding power of the Divine Presence, destined to become at some time during that far-off by and by. The day may be distant, but it is coming; the standard high, but we may attain to it. The flesh is weak, is worn with pain, is full of importunate pleadings, but we may become its master. The world offers glittering prizes, but we may overcome the world. Perils impend, but leaping thunderbolts may not swerve us from our purpose. Calumnies darken the air, but with an all-conquering calm we can wait the uncurtaining of God's Tomorrow.

When will the battle period end? To one class, at the recall of the despised gift; to the other, at the perfecting of the Divine image. The final outcome of God's creative work on this planet I believe will be a host, which no one can number, of glorified spirits who through suffering and struggle under the immutable laws of

spiritual growth have attained unto the stature of the fullness of Christ. Not until we have ourselves entered into the "silent vastnesses of eternity" can we form any adequate conception of the glory yet to be revealed in this Creation's Masterpiece.

II

I now call attention to the second and third divisions of my theme; whether it was absolutely necessary for a Divine Visitant to come, and whether we have in the characteristics and career of the historic Christ convincing evidences that he was the Messiah foretold by Jewish prophets and by the world's most pressing needs.

Every plant is an organic unit. Its parts are complemental and are linked so intimately that no one can be separated from the others without fatal results. Root, stem, branch, and leaf are vitally essential, each to each, must remain in intimate union, and each play its part. There is a life-current flowing from the tiniest rootlets that weave their network in the dark and damp of the underworld, to the veined leaves that hang, wind-shaken and sun-kissed, from the outermost branches that reach toward the sky. Sever the connection and you stop the flow and end the life. The very forces which, before the severance, were invigorating and devoloping become destructive. The sunlight now scorches and withers, and the moisture in the air and soil rots the plant into unorganized dust again.

There has been established a vital union between not only the different parts of the organism

but also between the organism and its environment, the ingredients of the soil, the air, the raindrop, and the sunbeam, severance here being attended with equally fatal results. The central germ-force reaches with vitalizing influence to the remotest corner of the organism, directing where every particle of matter shall go and precisely what office it shall perform in perfecting the embodiment of the Divine ideal intrusted to its keeping. There is thus an interplay, an interdependence, binding together not only the different parts of an organism, but the clod of the valley with the cloud of the sky, even reaching through space the almost inconceivable distance of ninety-five millions of miles.

A more perfect and complex organization may be observed in the higher realm of animal life. Not only is every body, whether of mote or mammoth, an organized whole, a combination of parts by whose joint action a certain predetermined purpose is carried out, but each organ also in the combination is endowed and commissioned and has significance and efficiency only when conjoined with the others into one harmonious whole. The human eye, for example, has been found composed of hundreds of such complemental parts, some of the more noticeable being a self-adjusting window, carefully curved and accurately placed lenses, an elaborately prepared plate, susceptible of the slightest impression, consisting of a closely woven network of

the frayed ends of the optic nerve, oil and tear glands, sets of minute muscles to roll the balls and lift the lids with their fringed edges, and change the curvature of the crystalline lens. These have evidently been built with reference each to each, as only by a concert of action, can they effect an outlook to the spirit housed within. In this highly organized body of ours we find the brain in such close telegraphic communication with every fiber of flesh that nowhere, over the wide area which the skin covers, can even the fine point of a cambric needle find entrance without a message of warning being flashed over the wires to the central office. Along the motor nerves the will reaches, with its mandates, thousands of waiting muscles in that vast army that lies encamped throughout its kingdom.

The vital organs are also most closely conjoined, and are constantly sending out, along canals that ramify everywhere, rich cargoes of vitalized atoms, that, under the supervision of the all-dominant organizing central force, are incorporated into muscle and bone, tendon and nerve-fiber, cuticle, cord, cartilage, and brain tissue. Here, too, break the union, and you end the life. Any part of the body wrenched from this quickening contact with the controlling germ-power soon falls a prey to the ever-waiting, hungry hordes of chemical forces which tear it in pieces and despoil it of its glory.

And, also, between every animal organism and

its environment there must be maintained an equally constant union, or life will cease. It seems to be the special, if not sole, office of those marvelous animal instincts, which are unquestionably none other than a Divine informing, to promote and regulate this union as God first planned it.

This scheme of organization, which we find to prevail thus universally in these lowest kingdoms of vegetable and animal existences, has been discovered to be equally dominant in the higher realms of self-conscious thought and of moral choices. Careful grouping of parts, the widely reaching centralization of purpose and of power, is here as unmistakably present and as ineradicable. For example, our powers of reasoning and reflection cannot be exercised without the aid of the memory, for we must be able to recall and retain former conceptions in order to pass our thoughts in review, institute comparisons, draw inferences, reach conclusions; and for the exercise of the memory the imagination is indispensable, for we must picture whatever past incident or idea we recover to consciousness. The imagination must have, as its ready servitors, the mind's powers of association and suggestion, of comparison and contrast, and of memory, for its office is not to create outright, but to fashion new combinations, selecting its material from former perceptions and experiences. Thus the mind acts as a unit, thought being the result of

a combined operation of its faculties. As the brain is the instrument used in all thought-processes, and as all crude thought-material must come through the five bodily senses, the union of the intellectual world with the physical is also close and constant, and the deeply laid plan of organization in the one leaves its indelible impress on the other, is fairly inwrought into its very structure, so that the two may safely be considered parts of a still wider organization, all of whose vast multitude of members are in vital union with each other and with some central Over-Soul, its author and organizing spirit.

This union has been found to extend still further, linking mind with mind, each individual endowment of personality being essential to the healthful and efficient exercise and unfolding of the others, each having its peculiar fashioning with reference to this world-wide relationship. Here, too, the penalty of severance is death. This was not known until revealed by quite recent results of State-prison discipline. Solitary cell confinement has so uniformly ended in hopeless insanity or idiocy that the authorities have felt compelled to abandon this mode of punishment. While occasional solitude serves as a tonic and regulator, as a positive medicine to the mind, it will, if obstinately persisted in, turn into deadly poison. We must maintain communication with the ever-flowing thought-currents of the world and of Nature, must never suffer to

wholly cease within us that beat of pulse which is but God's beat of heart, by whose mighty enginery the world's thought-arteries are fed with a Divine vitality. This fact of a world-organism is brought out still further, and with ever-increasing emphasis, in the unmistakable drift of modern civilization toward a more intimate and organized interplay of all individual forces in society as may be noted in the increased facilities for travel and for interchange of thought, the multiplication of machinery, closer combinations of industries, the formation of great trusts and co-operative associations, the international federations for reform and for the forwarding of the researches of science. The Duke of Argyll, in his Reign of Law, but more recently in his work on The Unity of Nature, has presented certain phases of it with great learning and force. Walter Bagehot has attempted to show the extension of natural law to the political world; Herbert Spencer, its application to the social; and Prof. Henry Drummond, its reaching up even into the spiritual life of the soul.

The fact that we are parts of one vast, closely linked organism in our intellectual as well as our physical nature is again made evident whenever we attempt to develop any theme of thought. We work most effectively when we place ourselves as far as we can in a receptive frame, freeing our minds from all trammels of passion and preconceived opinion, being resolved to know only the

truth and fearlessly to state and stand by it, then inform ourselves as to all discovered pertinent facts, institute original investigations when possible, search through Nature, among the world's libraries, its customs, industries, its religions, political and social institutions, its exhibits of art, all the multiform phenomena of its ever-varying life, and after having thus thrown open every avenue of approach, place ourselves in closest vital union with the thought-movements of the planet and through them with the God of the planet, the great central thought-source, and having thus become fairly alive with our theme, quickened and filled, we hold our attention unswervingly to the subject of our purposed contemplation, and suffer our mental faculties to evolve their thought-products according to the methods predetermined by their Creator. Our minds are, we shall find, most consummately constructed pieces of mechanism, with most complicated yet most nicely adjusted parts, working with as perfect regularity as characterizes the processes of vegetable or animal growths. All we have to do,—all, in fact, we can do—, is to provide them with this fitting environment, this proper spiritual sustenance, and then hold fast the attention. God does the rest, we know not how. The mystery is as profound as that which envelops the unfolding of an acorn into a thousand-armed, million-leafed oak, or of the apparently structureless white of an egg into a

plumed songster. The environment is instinct with Divine life; the constructive mental germ-force is the product of a Divine quickening; the processes have been determined by a Divine order. To us is intrusted simply the choosing of the departments of thought in which they shall work their wonders. It is impossible for us to stop the unfolding of thought or to change the laws of the unfolding. We simply have directive power, and power to throw wide open all mental avenues, and keep up all necessary vital unions with this vast world-organism, of which we form part. We plant, we water, but God gives the increase. Thoughts spring up into consciousness, and unfold finally into flower and fruit, in strict conformity to methods and models devised in the inscrutable councils of the Almighty. As spiritual chemists we may exercise a choice as to the ingredients of the solution, but along what lines of symmetry the precipitated thoughts shall arrange themselves will depend on pre-established laws of crystallization, in determining which we are permitted to take no part. Or as spiritual gardeners, we may enrich and moisten the soil of the mind, and select and sow the seed; but with that our work ends, and God's begins.

Dr. Carpenter cites a fact that happily illustrates the automatic, unconscious action of the mind. An eminent mathematician one evening toilfully attempted the solution of a long and intricate problem, without success. He retired

and after a while fell asleep. In the middle of the night his wife was awakened by his leaving his bed. She watched, but said nothing. He went to his study table and busied himself for a time with his papers, and then returned. The next morning, when about to resume his studies, he found to his astonishment all the mysteries of his vexed problem unraveled in plain figures on the sheet before him, and to his greater astonishment he found, on inquiry, that he himself had, in the unconscious hours of sleep, accomplished what, while he was wide awake, had baffled his utmost endeavors.

I have often availed myself of this most marvelous property of the mind by presenting to it whatever subject perplexed me and eluded my grasp in as clear and forcible a light as lay in my power, and then deliberately turning my attention elsewhere with the intent, after an interval had elapsed, of again calling up the question. I have almost invariably found that the mind has, without any conscious effort on my part, in some secret and silent way, with clarified vision and unwonted concentrative energy, performed most difficult tasks without any discoverable fatigue or friction. There is rarely a person that has not had frequent and pleasant surprises of this sort. They are genuine surprises to most, because the existence of these mental laws is not generally known, and a deliberate attempt to thus turn them to account is a rare oc-

currence. People generally puzzle and study until, in a fit of discouragement or pressed by other cares, they toss the themes aside, only to find afterward, upon some chance recurrence, the much-coveted prizes fairly thrust upon them, coming out of their hiding places like sudden flashes of intuition, though unquestionably they are the result of long processes of unconscious ratiocination.

On one occasion I had revealed to me with what lightning speed the mind works when thus left untrammeled in its organic action. I had made quite laborious preparation to write a character-analysis of a certain literary celebrity. I had read what I could find on the subject and had taken quite extensive notes of facts and suggestions. I had also jotted down whatever had come up in my own reflections, from time to time, without regard to order, without any plan of treatment. After I had thus gathered my material I set myself to the task of evolving order out of this wild chaos. After long study I could discover only one line of treatment that to me seemed at all possible, and still with that I was quite dissatisfied. I finally shut my desk, heartily discouraged, and began some vigorous manual exercise, leaving my mind seemingly in a state of vacuity, of absolute rest. To my utter astonishment and delight, while still swinging my axe, a hitherto entirely unthought-of plan flashed upon me. It

came wholly unbidden, for I had not then learned of this unconscious automatic mental action. The plan proved to be precisely what I needed.

I have had recourse frequently to the same methods, when desirous of recalling any past thing or thought.

The fact of our being parts of a wide-reaching organism again becomes manifest when persons of reflective, studious habits have taken a careful review of their thought-history, for they find that it possesses a very noticeable symmetry and system, and that too without any conscious purposing on their part. The mind when left free to work naturally and healthily will fall into methods which are the outgrowth of its peculiar organic structure, its environment being assimilated and transformed into it.

An analysis of the works of great literary geniuses will confirm this statement. The minds that are the most gifted will be found to be those of greatest intuitive power, in closest sympathetic communication with Nature and the great throbbing intellectual life of the world; those that are characterized most by this unconscious action, and untrammeled by conventionalisms, and unawed by public opinion; that stand loyal to their own individuality, and independently assert what they candidly believe to be true. Such are pre-eminently Divinely led, because they implicitly trust in and follow the promptings of a nature Divinely bestowed. They may not be de-

vout, may not design to be under Divine leadership or realize that they are. They are simply healthily self-reliant and self-asserting, candid, impressionable, assimilative. They are something more than echoes of their age, for their large susceptibility is accompanied with equally large assimilative capacity, and their strong natures vitalize and transmute their intellectual environment into finer forms of spiritual essence, into their own unique personality. But this transmutation is wholly an unconscious process, under the conduct of Divine methods and instrumentalities. They simply follow out the promptings of their instinctive impulses, or, as we are wont to phrase it, follow the bent of their own genius.

Shakespeare is a notable illustration of this. It is universally conceded that his was one of the most original, creative minds ever placed on this planet. Yet he so little realized his peerless powers that he used them simply for purposes of livelihood, and when a competence was secured he left the London playhouses, retired to his estate at Stratford-on-Avon, and was so unconcerned about his fame, so careless of his manuscripts, that he left them scattered about the theaters, and it was not till some time after his death that two appreciative friends collected what of them they could find and identify, and handed them over to literary immortality, to be the delight and wonder of all nations in all succeeding centuries. He was

not a product of the schools, yet he seems to have been wonderfully conversant with literature and with the living thought of his age, so great were his absorbent powers. His conceptions took on dramatic form, for that was the one then generally prevailing. He was the glory, the consummate flower, of the Elizabethan era, his pages glowing with the enthusiasm of its literary renascence, with its bright awakening from the darkness and thrall with which the bigotry of the Romish Church had cursed the Middle Ages. The Bible had under Henry VIII been unchained, and the world's rich stores of classic learning broken open and again made free to all. He drank in the spirit of his time as naturally and freely as his lungs filled with the air about him. This quickened spiritual pulse of old England beat strong and full in Shakespeare's veins. The breadth of his knowledge, the depth of his insight, the intuitional quickness of his perceptions, the exuberance of his fancy, were excelled only by the outspoken, unstudied naturalness with which his thoughts burst into bloom and filled the world with their fragrance. He surely had no purpose of building up a system of philosophy; he never dreamed that his dramas had any connection with each other, yet a keen critic of to-day has shown us that they are actually bound together in close organic union, that Shakespeare "builded better than he knew," was as profound a philosopher as he was a gifted poet. I once expressed to this

commentator great incredulity as to the soundness of his interpretation, remarking that he had seemingly injected into these writings his own thought-life, had displayed his own fertility of invention, but he stoutly contended, and, I found after more careful reflection, contended with good reason, that Shakespeare did actually, though unconsciously, construct and illustrate a most profound system of philosophy; that his dramas, so far from standing alone as utterances of wholly disassociated moods, were complemental parts of one grand organum.

This writer told me further that he believed he had discovered a still wider generalization, and had nearly ready for the press an extensive work, reaching through seven or eight volumes, on "The Four Literary Gospels," in which he maintains that Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and Goethe, the great apostles of the world's literature, have embodied in their productions the four great stages of the world's intellectual evolution, and should be considered together as component parts of one vast world-system of thought—so vast that long centuries of world history have been required for its full unfolding and embodiment.

Do we not see here the stately steppings of Divinity? Is there not here all the consummate regularity of organic action, all the oneness of plan we note in the unfolding through time of an amorphic bank of cosmic vapor into a peopled planet?

If we extend our inquiries into the phenomena of spiritual life, we shall also find evidences everywhere of this same most thorough organization, the different parts constructed with a view to concert of action, under the directive control of some central organizing power with which they are all vitally joined. The most cursory glance will reveal that our spiritual experiences are but the outgrowth of our multiform and intimate relationships. Indeed, it seems that it was for just such glorious consummation of moral character, of healthful individuality, that all this marvelous system within system was at the first devised.

On close inspection it will be found that all the virtues are but the protean forms of a single attitude of the soul, that of self-forgetting sympathy. It is this which, as I have shown elsewhere, knits together friends, endears home circles, incites philanthropy, fires the breasts of patriots, and consecrates the Cross.

When this feeling prevails a unity of purpose binds together the widest diversities of gifts. Friends find themselves halves of one whole, and become mutually helpful, supplying by their complemental parts each other's lack, inspiriting and consecrating each other's efforts and aspirations. Souls in an environment of unselfish love flow together in obedience to laws of spiritual affinity as exact and inexorable as those which control in the chemical unions which are effected in Nature's laboratory. The differently endowed and tem-

pered members of a household, being once imbued with this spirit, find their place as readily and inevitably as do the crystallizing particles of some solution. Led by a central organizing force, they follow lines of social and spiritual symmetry as mathematically exact and as Divinely predetermined as those which fix the contours of crystals. They soon discover that they are as vitally joined to each other, and to some central directing power, as are the parts of a plant or the members of an intricately constructed animal organism. Families are combined into communities, and communities into commonwealths, in unsuspecting obedience to similar laws of Divine order. Just so soon as this vital love-union ceases, the several souls sink into spiritual disintegration and death. As diseases of the body mark a partial severance, so petty jealousies and heartburns and pride, the changing of generous emulations into covert, selfish ambitions, outcroppings of sharp criticisms, a spirit of greed, a love of display—all indicate a partial severance, a process of devitalization which, unless arrested, will end in death. So many of earth's friendships, family circles, and commonwealths have fallen prey to these disintegrating forces of selfishness that we cannot turn our eyes to any age or clime without finding the plains strewn thick with their bleaching skeletons. The truth that voluntary, unsympathetic isolation, even under the most favorable circumstances, will uniformly end in lamentable spiritual

disaster, has been proclaimed in burning words by Tennyson in his "Palace of Art." To illustrate and enforce it, this foremost poet of the age placed under tribute his finest pictorial power. He built for the hermit's soul a lordly pleasure-house, looking out on a landscape full of most entrancing beauty, looking in on open courts, where fountains leaped and murmured, with walls hung with speaking canvas fit for every mood and change of thought, with marble-carved forms of angels far overhead among its spanning arches, with rich mosaics underfoot choicely planned into suggestive pictures of the past, with apartments redolent with rarest perfumes and echoing with silver notes of self-swung bells. Here for three years, with every bodily want, every æsthetic craving, satisfied, away from the turmoils and troubles of earthly human life, this seemingly highly favored soul throve and prospered in her isolation. But

" . . . . on the fourth she fell,
Like Herod, when the shout was in his ears,
Struck thro' with pangs of hell.

"Lest she should fail and perish utterly,
God, before whom ever lie bare
The abysmal depths of Personality,
Plagued her with sore despair.

"When she would think, where'er she turned her sight,
The airy hand confusion wrought,
Wrote 'Mene, mene,' and divided quite
The Kingdom of her thought.

"Deep dread and loathing of her solitude
Fell on her."

From out dark corners in her palace-home phantoms glared, nightmare shapes appeared, and blackened corpses. She seemed to herself shut up as in a crumbling tomb. At last

"She threw her royal robes away,
'Make me a cottage in the vale,' she said,
'Where I may mourn and pray.' "

With this vital, sympathetic touch with our fellows—without which we can do nothing, enjoy no spiritual health, make no spiritual progress—there at once becomes operative the law of spiritual assimilation, which has the same Divine origin, and is as inexorable, as the laws that control in chemical combinations of affinitive molecules. Companions whose inner spiritual lives commingle, inevitably grow into each other's likeness, the stronger nature producing the deeper, more lasting spiritual impressment.

There is no influence in the world that will at all compare in potency with this of personal presence. Indeed, all others combined are outweighed by it. Every soul which secures to itself spiritual vigor and enlargement will be found to be intimately linked with stronger and nobler natures, out from which course currents of irresistible, vitalizing power. From our cradles, by the very instincts of our being, we become hero-worshippers, and our hearts' heroes are the

molders and masters of our hearts. Some personal presence, then, without and above humanity, must be in vital contact with it, to insure to the world permanent moral elevation. A chain of influences must reach up to God's throne. Otherwise, by this very spiritual law we have announced, the whole race would soon sink into a state of spiritual equilibrium, the lowest and the highest finally meeting on a common level. Whatever of spiritual life the world possesses today must have come originally from this Divine source, and human companionships have been but channels of its dissemination. The fact that the human race has made moral progress through the centuries can be explained only on the ground that it has been blessed with Divine companionship. That it has not made far greater progress is clearly chargeable to a voluntary failure fully to avail itself of this most inestimable privilege. Spiritual deterioration in individual lives because of this withdrawal from God's proffered presence is, alas! too frequent to require any confirmation. Not a single instance can be cited, either in individual or national history, of the developing of the supposed inherent promise and potency of spiritual life without this Divine environment. The Duke of Argyll has, in his "Primeval Man," challenged evolutionists to prove that any people has ever risen out of savagery into civilization without being incited and helped to it by influences from without.

To develop the Godlikeness in human souls through this very law of spiritualization, what more effective way could be devised than to have a man in a most intimate relationship with the Divine Spirit enter human history? To bring the Divine Heart into closer sympathetic relation with men, to present incontestable evidences of God's loving estimate of man's infinite possibilities, of his longing to enter into closer intimacy with these his cherished children, an Immanual must come, and by thus transfusing his own spirit he would transform theirs. As soon as they permit his tears and smiles to mingle with theirs, clasp his hand of friendly greeting, open with glad welcome the door of their hearts as he stands waiting, look into his face radiant with a self-forgetting love, listen to his voice as, in tones as gentle and winning as a mother's, it asks, as it speaks their name, "Lovest thou me?"—then, but not till then, will their spirits begin to thrill with that Divine vitality that has in it the power of an endless life.

Thus we can see how firmly based on the deep principles of this world-organism would be his warning that without him we can do nothing, as also his promise that with him we can do all things, that he is the vine and we the branches, and that we must abide in him if we would have life and bear fruit. These utterances of the historic Christ were bold and startling. If he did not regard his human spirit as intimately linked with

the Divine they were blasphemous; if he did, then profoundly true, for under this law of spiritual assimilation no spiritual blessing within the range of our asking lies without the reach of his giving. Even the feeblest and least gifted rise, under the influences of such a companionship, into the fullness of his stature.

This statement is so astounding that it is difficult, well-nigh impossible, for us to realize or credit it; but we shall find ourselves wonderfully reassured if we note the well-nigh limitless capacity for being uplifted possessed by everything God has made, and the power to uplift bestowed upon the various forces he has commissioned to bring finally into full perfection the embodiment of his creative thought. In an Oriental proverb we find the conception of this Divine plan crystallized into a gem worthy to be worn in the crown of our rejoicing: "I was but common clay till roses were planted in me." Into this sentence is compressed the profoundest philosophy of all the ages. We may use it as a Rosetta Stone to decipher the many mysterious hieroglyphs written on the world's walls by the finger of God. I still watch with wonderment and awe the unfolding phenomena of the vegetable world. These tiny architectural artists of Nature are enveloped in such unfathomable mystery. Their mantles of invisibility are never unclasped. Their deft fingers move as noiselessly as sunbeams. Their lips are as mute as the lips of the dead. Yet without

confusion, without hesitancy, without mistake, they transform amorphic matter into symmetries and tints and flavors and perfumes that become to us speaking symbols of God's love. Out from the foul stagnancy of the marsh a lily lifts its pure white lips to receive the kisses of the sun. What delicacy of fragrance, grace of form, charm of color, fineness of texture, marvelous etherealization of gross substances, evidencing the well-nigh limitless uplifting power of this Divinely commissioned germ-fairy that has been sent into this most unpromising part of God's kingdom! Similar miracle workings fill the earth; indeed, as the modern microscope discloses, the capacities of matter for refinement are practically infinite.

Animal germs take these same gross elements after they have been thus uplifted by the vegetable, and carry them still higher, even to the very border-land of spirits, weaving them at last into a veil of so ethereal a texture that sometimes, in privileged moments, we catch glimpses through it, we are well-nigh persuaded, of the spirits themselves of our loved ones, for the human face at times seems not only to reflect, in its mobile features, changing colors, flitting lights and shadows, the thought-life within, but to be suffused with some strange preternatural radiance, that suggests the outshining of the glory tints of the soul, of the halo of its very essence.

So universally prevalent throughout Nature are these displays of matter's capacity for being up-

lifted that only those peculiarly gifted with poetic perennial freshness of thought and reverent interpretative insight are properly impressed with the deep significance of promise and of prophecy they possess for every one of us.

We are taught, not only thus by the marvelous movements of life below us, but by the whole course of life about us, forming the incidents of the world's individual and national histories, that if we come into vital union with spirits superior, live in their personal presence, thrill to their talismanic touch, bask in the sunshine of their sympathy, we shall grow into spiritual exaltations of purpose that will eventually ripen into permanent traits of character of whose possibility of development we before had never dreamed. Let the seed of Christ's Divine love be planted within us, and the common clay of our natures, that would have forever remained but common clay were it not for this union, will under its magical power be uplifted and transformed into roses whose graces of form, of tint, and of perfume will win for us by and by glad welcome into the Paradise of God.

Thus we see that the advent of just such a personage as the Christ of the Gospels was absolutely essential to consummate the plan of organization Divinely purposed from the beginning; that just such a spiritually vitalizing influence was needed to be infused into individual experiences to prevent the whole fabric, so elaborately built through the long centuries, from falling into wreck. This

unmistakable necessity for the coming of Christ, living such a life of loving self-sacrifice, making such a revelation of the yearning sympathy of the Divine Heart, coming into such vital union with waiting souls, contains in itself the sure promise of his coming, and testifies that the historic Christ is the veritable Christ of prophecy.

The necessity which scientific inquiry has disclosed of this quickening touch to thus complete God's vast plan of world-organism reveals to us Christ's place in Nature. It was not that his sacrifice was essential to satisfy the demands of a broken law, to pay its penalty so as to render possible and safe God's forgiveness and man's reinstatement,—such a thought finding no warrant, so far as I can see, either in science or sound philosophy,—but to work such change in human hearts, exert over them such ennobling influences, reach out with such tender, life-giving sympathies, as to win men back to loving obedience, and thus fit them for the forgiveness God is ever anxiously waiting to bestow upon the repentant and believing.

Science in thus discovering the indispensable need of such a work witnesses to the reasonableness of the Christian's faith in an exceptionally intimate union of Christ's spirit with the Divine.

A half-century ago Doctor Horace Bushnell with most elaborate and profound argument sought thus to interpret Christ's mission and to show how the whole trend of Scripture teaching,

once rightly understood, would be found to sustain such a view however widely it differed from the accepted creed of Christendom. Though strikingly correct as to his conclusions, however imperfect and involved at times the course of reasoning by which they were reached, and though strikingly in consonance with sound judgment and our innate sense of justice, the Doctor, instead of winning wide sympathetic assent, raised such a storm of denunciatory criticism for presuming to attack the supposed citadel of Christian faith he barely escaped being driven from the pulpit for rank heresy, and nowhere to this late day among the many promulgated articles of Christian doctrine can any trace be found of the Bushnell innovation.

The Greek Church affirms that "Christ has done and suffered in our stead all that was necessary for the remission of our sins"; while the Roman Catholic Church takes the same stand, announcing that "it was a sacrifice most acceptable unto God offered by his Son on the altar of the Cross which entirely appeased the wrath and indignation of the Father"; and in the Westminster Confession we find reiterated this identical concept in the words, "The Lord Jesus by his perfect obedience and sacrifice of himself hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father and has purchased reconciliation and entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven for all whom his Father hath given him."

Doctor McConnell, an eminent Episcopalian divine, in a very recent work, gives practically the same interpretation of Christ's mission that Doctor Bushnell did, though he arrives at his conclusion by an entirely different method.

In remarking as to the common creed of the churches he says, "The suggestion that the parent would slay the child to regain his own peace and to safeguard his own justice is one so wildly irrational that one can only stand amazed when he confronts it in theologic guise."

Underlying all the variant views of the different Christian sects there is to be found "this fundamental belief that Christ was a sacrifice offered to appease an incensed Judge, and that it has been so far efficacious that it has left God with no valid claim against any man who takes the proper steps to interpose this safeguard between the impending judgment and himself. Propitiation of God by sacrifice and the transference of righteousness from the innocent to the guilty are of its very essence, and they are both but survivals of an ancient blind paganism." The present widespread decline and apathy of the churches, the alarming defection among thoughtful inquirers, they either silently withdrawing or else keeping aloof from fellowship, he attributes to this still holding fast on the part of the churches to the old-time dogma of propitiatory sacrifice. He thinks that the Church is now passing through a most grave crisis, that the old creeds are no

longer binding and in many particulars have been outgrown, that the educated and reflective do not care to be compromised by appearing to endorse what they no longer hold true. He points out that the Mosaic and Levitical codes were designed not so much to foster as to limit as far as that rude age would permit, and eventually to eliminate, the still prevailing pagan notion of a necessary sacrificial offering to placate an angry God. He declares that "the Epistle to the Hebrews construed Christ's mission in terms of Hebrew sacrifice and that St. Paul's teachings were in the mixed terms of Hebrew sacrifice and Roman Law," that "the Light thus shining through imperfect and stained windows was sadly refracted and discolored," that "Christianity at the bottom should be construed as a life-process and not a commercial transaction," that the "Higher Criticism" had set free the reason and intuitive moral perception in the study of the Bible for the determining of the extent and the nature of its inspiration, the precise meaning and degree of inerrancy of its precepts and revelations, that this volume though wonderfully rich and suggestive was henceforth to be regarded simply as a collection of religious literature, a record of life experiences and devout reflections of many centuries, designed as a helpful stimulant, not as an authoritative dictum and finality, but progressive in its revelations and standards of motive and conduct, that the New Testament was to a

large extent a revisal, and in many things a reversal of the Old, modifying and enlarging its conceptions, that as none of the reputed words of Christ promulgate this doctrine of vicarious atonement with the exception of two short phrases to be found in the twentieth and twenty-sixth chapters of Matthew, at the close of the twenty-eighth verse in each, and as they are so out of all accord with his other sayings and were not committed to writing until at least thirty-five years after his death, but handed down by the uncertain word of mouth, we would not be going beyond our privilege to regard them as possibly the unauthorized interpolations of some unknown scribe and in no way binding upon Christian believers.

Doctor Bushnell, believing Paul's teachings inspired and authoritative, yet being unable to accept the current conception of vicarious sacrifice, employed his remarkable gifts, amounting almost to genius, in showing how Paul has been entirely misunderstood and that Christ's mission was not to reconcile God to man but man to God. The whole misconception of Christendom, he conjectured, has grown out of a too wide separation of the three persons in the Godhead, and that had God been conceived of as possessing a unified and indivisible self, that he was triune only in some such sense as we are, the three persons being but three phases of the self-same Divine Ego, the stern sense of justice of the Father and the

yearning self-abnegating love of the Son representing but different attitudes of the one Divine Spirit toward humanity, the theology of the ages would not have gone so lamentably far astray. Modern science in so far as it has been able to penetrate the deep mysteries of personality has by its disclosures confirmed with no uncertain emphasis, though without design, this view of Christ's nature and the purpose of his mission, advanced by these two learned doctors of divinity.

It will be found, I am strongly persuaded, that the doctrine that Christ in one very important sense was Divine, when once rightly understood, does not necessarily contain any confusion of thought as to the true nature of personality, or in any way antagonize the conclusions of science on this the most perplexing of questions, but that modern discoveries in mental phenomena will be found here also to be Christianity's most helpful allies. There are three widely different opinions prevailing among evangelical theologians as to Christ's nature; first, that he never possessed any human soul, but that a human body simply was animated for a season by the Divine Spirit; second, that while he indeed had a soul, this was so completely and permanently blended with the Divine Spirit that they together constituted a single new and unique personality which will remain intact through all the eternal ages; third, that Christ was of a dual nature, lived a dual life, had two infinitely different spirits alternately

animating and controlling his body, sending electric waves of thought and emotion over the brain, that most delicate and mysterious of all its organs, that at times only the human was manifest with its many weaknesses and limitations, its longings and its griefs, and then again only the Divine appeared, teaching with authority, forgiving sins, scanning the secret intents of the heart, lifting the curtains of the future, healing the sick, restoring the blind, even raising the dead.

I seriously question whether the first two opinions can bear the searching scrutiny of this critical age, and as neither of them embodies my own belief I will not now take time to state their grounds of defense. The third, however, seeming to be in perfect accord not only with the facts of history but with the conclusions of science, is worthy of at least a tentative acceptance. Multitudinous instances are well authenticated of one personality being for a time completely submerged by another through that marvelous power denominated mesmeric influence. These show that duality of nature is certainly possible, that two spirits can alternately employ the same set of bodily organs. We have seen the mesmerized under this strange spell losing for a time his identity, thinking the thoughts and thrilling with the emotional life of another. I, of course, would not attempt to designate or explain the precise mode of this particular Divine informing in the case of Christ, but simply to show that the facts

we have unearthed in our scientific researches into the subtle power of mind over matter in the realm of Nature as well as of mind over mind serve to illustrate and confirm the third attempted explanation of the mystery that shrouds this the strangest visitant our earth has ever had. The testimony of our own self-consciousness convinces us that the *ego* is an indivisible unit, a wholly separate entity in itself, from which nothing can be taken, to which nothing can be added, with which no other *ego* can be so blended that they will permanently disappear and a new complex third *ego* result from this union. But that one *ego* can so dominate over another, so completely capture the body that incases it and through which alone it can operate as to cause a period of oblivion to pass over it, is a fact that can be witnessed almost any day. The vanished *ego* is, however, not destroyed but simply repressed and will promptly reassert itself the moment the dominating power is removed. There is here no blending of *egos*, no joint action of consciousness, nor is there the incoming of some new self, but simply the temporary domination of the stronger over the weaker one. This, it seems to me, is a possible explanation of the many apparent contradictions in Christ's allusions to himself and in the facts of his life. In that forty days' combat with the tempter at the opening of his career, in that last all-night agony of prayer in the Garden at its close, in all the sufferings and strug-

glings and most glorious triumphings that filled the years between, in all his sense of weakness and weariness and most pressing need of help which his frequent seasons of secret prayer betray, we see the brave battlings of simply a noble human soul; but when we hear him call out in tones of authority as he stands with mourning friends at the door of a sepulchre "Lazarus, come forth," when we hear him say to the helpless paralytic as he is laid at his feet "Thy sins are forgiven thee," when we hear him assure the penitent brigand who hangs beside him on the cross, "This day thou shalt be with me in Paradise," we hear the voiced mandates and blessed assurances of a God.

Thus we see that Science cannot rightly urge against the claim that Christ was both human and Divine the objection that this is in direct conflict with the testimony of self-consciousness as to the essential unity and indivisibility of the *ego*. Great confusion of thought has arisen among the mass of Christian believers out of the dogma, which they feel forced to accept, that while there is but one God he is composed of three separate independent personalities. They are seemingly uninformed that the word "persons" can be used in a restricted sense and indeed has been in the polemical writings of some of our most eminent theologians. It is unquestionably impossible for us to conceive of three absolutely distinct *egos* being combined into one, and that too during the

very time they, each, maintain intact their own individuality. This is simply a contradiction and confusion of thought, or rather, we might say, it is mere jugglery of words; for to us, constituted as we are, with our clear consciousness of a unified and indivisible self, such a proposition is absolutely unthinkable. But there is a sense in which we ourselves possess a triune nature, the *ego* in us being made up of the intellect, the sensibility and the will. We are capable of self-communings, of self-criticism, of self-conflict, of general introspective thought. In this sense and only in this, can we form any adequate conception of what has been styled a triune God, and without a conception, a picture in the mind, belief is impossible. It is said that we are created in God's image. Certain it is that the very utmost we can conceive of God is as a spirit possessing in infinite perfection faculties and attributes similar to those which we ourselves possess in but partially developed germ, the difference being not in kind but simply in degree and in healthfulness of development. If he has any quality or attribute radically different from ours, of which there is in us no likeness, we can have no knowledge of it whatever, it cannot possibly be revealed to us, we having no conceptual capacity for such a thought. As well attempt to teach the horse we drive a proposition in Euclid. Therefore all we know of God or can believe about him must necessarily come through the medium of our

own self-knowledge, and through that alone. The three persons in the Trinity can possibly mean to us nothing more than different phases or presentations of the same Divine *Ego*, and any language of Scripture which seems to mean more than this must be regarded simply as bold poetic personification, a mode of thought peculiarly fascinating to the quickly kindling fancy of the Orient, and a marked feature of its literature.

"At morn I prayed, 'I fain would see
How Three are One and One is Three
Read the dark riddle unto me.'

. . . . . .

"In vain I turned in weary quest
Old pages where (God give them rest)
The poor creed mongers dreamed and guessed.

. . . . . .

"O! blind of sight, of faith how small
Father and Son and Holy Call,
This day thou hast denied them all.

"Revealed in love and sacrifice
The Holiest passed before thine eyes
One and the same in three-fold guise.

"The equal Father in rain and sun,
His Christ in the good to evil done,
His Voice in thy soul;—and the three are one."

. . . . . .

"And my heart answered 'Lord I see
How Three are One and One is Three
The riddle hath been read to me.'"

The more deeply I have reflected on the absolute necessity of Christ's mission, and the equally absolute adequacy of it for the completion of this vast plan of world-organism to which I have directed attention, the more deeply I have been impressed with Christ's unique universality of nature, his perfect intellectual and spiritual equipment, his majestic, incomparable world-sympathy. There is a notable absence of any racial aversion, of any narrow Jewish bigotry or prejudice, of any limitation characteristic of some single age, or class, or clime. His conceptions and ethical principles are such as can never be out-grown by advancing culture, by the widening of the horizons of thought, by higher world-standards. He still stands in the fore-front, though nineteen centuries have come and gone since his advent. He satisfies the needs of all social grades, of all mental types. Self-effacing love, life's quenchless, mightiest, foremost force, is that which he has ever sought to evoke, which he aims to make the main motive in every human heart, the highest ideal in every human life. Devoted attachment to himself as an ever living personality is the imperishable incentive in his religion. By it he has brought the Divine Spirit out of the inscrutable solitudes into the purview of human thought, within the embrace of human love. This supreme attachment is the quickening force in all social ethical advancements. It has prompted all the great beneficences for humanity,

kindled hatred of oppression, purified love of liberty, awakened zeal for the truth, inspired hope in the despondent, proved itself indispensable in the manifold uplift of the race. Christ's high ideals permeate all best literatures, all highest art, have been paramount in all advancements in social reform during past centuries.

Right here this most vital question forces itself upon every thoughtful mind; has it been revealed in the character and career of Christ that the Divine and the human spirit can be inter-penetrative, that there is an affinity of nature between the two, a close communion of life, and at the same time a distinctiveness of personality, and that the incarnation disclosed not only God to man but also man to himself as God's ideal susceptible of subsequent unfolding into complete likeness and finally into joint heirship with Christ himself? It was imperative that there should be revealed a Divine Ideal for the human soul to aspire after and grow to.

This subtle, magnetic transforming power of personal intimacy and attachment has arrested attention in these last days of tireless scientific inquiry with an emphasis never before felt. Its inexhaustible possibilities have filled us with amazement. It was this influence of such strange, measureless potency which Christ chose with an infinite wisdom as his chief ally to disciple mankind and win his kingdom.

Yet exactly how Christ was Divine, how the

union of the two natures was effected and maintained, and how it is that we with our finiteness are assured that we will eventually become as truly Divine with him if we through his influence finally grow into his spirit of loving self-sacrifice, has long been with me a very serious and most perplexing question. How is it that he is our elder brother, that we are to be joint heirs with him, if he was really Divine? What did he mean in that marvelous farewell prayer for his disciples when he said "The glory which thou gavest me I have given them," if that glory was essentially a Divine effulgence? Is it possible that our spirits will be privileged at the last to enter into the self-same intimate union with the Divine that Christ experienced and to undergo a like Divine transfiguration? Was it a man or a God or both combined that suffered and died on the Cross? or was the union and the suffering on God's part simply sympathetic, each spirit maintaining intact through it all its own distinctive personality? The discoveries of modern science have for me gone far in solving this the deepest mystery of the ages. The thought has already been incorporated in preceding paragraphs but lest it has not been duly emphasized or made clear I will venture on a brief restatement of its salient points.

Confirmatory of our modern belief in the existence of an intimately woven material world-organism is the discovery of what is termed

luminiferous ether, the nature and universal prevalence of which I have elsewhere attempted to describe. Its apparent properties are so utterly at variance with those of which we have always supposed matter to consist we have been tempted at first to dismiss all statements concerning it as preposterous, as wholly chimerical, but as there is no dissenting voice among scientists as to its reality and its seemingly contradictory properties we are simply forced to confess that there are mysteries about matter we are not yet able to fathom. As John Fiske puts it, "How curious to think that we live and move in an ocean of ether, in which the particles of all material things are floating like islands. But how amazing to learn that this ocean of ether is also an adamantine firmament. Is not this sheer nonsense, an ocean-firmament of ether-adamant. Yet such seems to be the fact and our philosophy must make the best of it." Granite and steel are conspicious for their solidity, yet the particles of which they are composed, instead of touching each other are floating like separate islands in this strange ether. Although its pressure is, according to Herschel, Jevons and other eminent scientists equal to seventeen billion pounds to the square inch, indicating an almost infinite compactness, we cannot feel it, we cannot see it, and the swarming worlds that people space whirl through it as unobstructedly as through a vacuum. It is through this that waves of light

are propagated at a speed of from one hundred and eighty-five to two hundred thousand miles per second, electricity is flashed, radiant heat travels, magnetic attractions and repulsions thrill and startle with their mysteries, the universal force of gravitation is supposed to maintain its sway. With what incredulity we first heard of the achievements of the telegraph with its long stretches of metal highways over whose closed circuits the mind's messages succeeded in winging their way. Now by touching the keys of our instruments we toss our thoughts out into wireless space and instantly throughout all this circumambient ether circling waves of agitation widen out into immensity, following each other in inconceivably rapid succession until at last, leagues of distance away, they break on the shore of some attuned receiver and tell their tale of joy or sorrow to some listening ear, to some throbbing heart. The fact that thus distance is practically annihilated, that soul is thus brought into immediate touch with soul we would utterly refuse to credit were it not demonstrated hour after hour right in our very presence.

These astounding phenomena find their counterpart in the spiritual realm. Without strung wires, without electric instruments of any kind, our widely separated spirits are somehow, we do not know how, brought into telepathic touch with each other. We not only seem to hear each other's voices, to look into each other's familiar

faces, but even to step across the threshold of the flesh and enter within the veil. It took many years of patient investigation to convince us that the phenomena of telepathy were anything more than figments of a disordered fancy. Now, however, they are accepted everywhere as proven facts of science. We have not yet discovered the laws under which these communications are carried on nor the exact nature of that all pervasive transmitting medium whose real existence we have long since ceased to question, and have not yet succeeded in bringing into service these occult powers as we have those of steam and electricity, but their actual existence has become thoroughly established, and they, too, will, no doubt, some day be brought under man's control and answer to his needs. Closely allied with them are hypnotic, clairvoyant, and other partially hidden powers which also as yet manifest themselves largely under abnormal conditions. They seem in great part to be held in reserve, whether for a later period in this life or for some other sphere of existence we cannot now determine. Until we have further light we would be justified in regarding them as precursors, foreshadowings of a life beyond.

The psychotherapeutic dominance of the subconscious self, of which we are now hearing so much, which Christ doubtless employed as one of the agencies in effecting cures during his earthly ministry, and which he left as a legacy to his

disciples, is a part and a proof no doubt of this intimate interplay of forces in the world-organism of which I have hitherto been speaking. This complicate organization established throughout the physical and spiritual realms seems to have been devised in the counsels of eternity as Christ's instrument for winning souls into his Kingdom, for it was with the magnetism of just such an infinitely loving personality he came surcharged and which he still retains in all its matchless, living force, it was with this self-same personal affection he sought to inspire his disciples. Upon the entering thus into closest touch with all human hearts he based his hopes of ultimately winning and transforming all human lives. In that last most tenderly pathetic prayer for his little group of followers and their successors how significant that he should repeat over and over again this very conception we have been trying to express, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one as we are—neither pray I for these alone but for them also which shall believe on me through their word, that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me and I in thee, that they may be made perfect in one." An intent yearning for an eternal love-union seemed to have poured in like a flood on his sorrow-burdened soul in these last hours. Right here we find the true touchstone of his ministry.

F. W. H. Myers, in his last and greatest work

entitled "Human Personality," has remarked, "It was a great day when a previously unsuspected capacity for electrical excitation demonstrated the fact that we had long been acted upon by electricity as well as by heat and light; that we were living in an inconceivable and limitless environment, —namely an ether charged with infinite energy, overpassing and interpenetrating alike the last gulf of darkness and the extremest star. May we not suppose that there are yet other environments, other interpenetrations which a further awakening of faculty still subliminal is yet fated by its own nascent response to discover. It was a great day when a previously unsuspected capacity of telepathic percipience revealed the fact that we had long been acted upon by telepathic as well as by sensory stimuli, and that we were living in an inconceivable and limitless environment,—a thought-world or spiritual universe charged with infinite life, interpenetrating and overpassing all human spirits—up to what some have called World-Soul, and some God."

Eminent psychologists claim and fortify their claim with most startling facts, that below the region of consciousness there exists a secret workshop of the mind in which are wrought no one knows how, most marvelous products of thought, products that border on the miraculous. Here is the mysterious birthplace of intuitions, of creative concepts, of deductive hypotheses which eventuate in great discoveries. Here too

is the birthplace of poetic inspiration, of previsision, and out of here issue all those inimitable dreams of genius that so enrich literature and art and science and religious belief. In my research I have found well attested facts of a most startling nature, a few of which I have recited in my treatment of the efficacy of prayer, facts which have filled me with wonderment, even with reverence, at the seemingly inexhaustible possibilities of the human spirit. The first conceptions of works of genius, and often their full perfected form have been marked in their genesis by most surprising spontaneity, by strange absence of conscious effort, they coming up uncalled for, and unaccounted for, out of the depths of the unknown.

In the presence of these facts and experiences are we not entirely justified in the conviction that it is out from this very region, as yet but little explored, of the sub-conscious-self vast and, for aught we know, infinite in extent, reaching down into personality far beyond where human plummet has ever yet sounded, that it is out from this region of shadow there issue the great inspirations of life, that it is through this most mysterious region we come into answering touch with the environing spirit world of the universe, even with God himself. Do not these astounding discoveries of the complete compactness and intense vitalization of the universe and of our own vantage ground in it growing out of this sub-

conscious part of our being, of whose capacities for spiritual outreach to both the living and the dead, and of direct impressment, we are as yet but very partially informed, afford us an invaluable clue to the solution of the mystery of the character and career of Christ. He was exceptionally equipped to come into closest touch with this sub-conscious self, to call into play its miracle-working powers, to bring their creations up to the threshold of consciousness, and thus to make them serviceable in the exigencies of his exceptional life. Did he not discern also in us potentially a like equipment, like abysmal depths of personality, a like open door into this universal spirit life, a key to unlock the exhaustless treasure-house of all sentient life, a possible widening of our horizons of thought and feeling to the very uttermost bounds of being, in short, power intimately to touch and take in, as did he, the very infinitude of the loving heart of God.

There are many facts in Christ's career that very strongly indicate that he was pre-eminently, as has been suggested, an ideal psychic healer. In every human individual a certain psychic force has been found lying latent ready to answer to the call of a confident, masterful concentrated will. Late discoveries as to the curative power of suggestion, put forth by an outsider or arising out of one's own consciousness, have been so startling as to well nigh stagger belief. Cults of various sorts have sprung up along down the cen-

turies, and greatly multiplied in these last days, making use in one way or another of this mysterious transcendency of the mind over the body.

The most startling and satisfactory results are obtained when the healer's will is most dominant, his faith in his own powers most supreme, his concentration of thought most complete, and, in conjunction with this, the patient's faith in the healer most unquestioning, freest from adverse auto-suggestions of every kind. As I have entered quite extensively into a discussion of this question in other parts of this volume I will here simply call attention to the fact that Christ in the great majority of his cures will be found to have followed closely the laws that most effectively set free this force. In nearly every instance he demanded an unquestioning faith on the part of the afflicted. He confessed that in certain localities he was nearly shorn of this one of his powers because of a lamentable lack of faith among the people. He spoke of healing virtue going out from him when certain individuals surcharged with this recipient faith contrived secretly to touch him. His disciples when they came to him with complaints of failure were told that the hampering cause was their lack of faith. In almost all instances of cure either by himself or by his disciples physical contact was employed as a factor, as a help to faith. A cold distrust operated seemingly as a powerful deterrent. This was doubtless true only in such cases as were

sought to be effected through this one channel alone. Thus far Christ utilized simply a psychotherapeutic force which is clearly within our own purview, and within, at least, our partial control. The nature of the other powers which he called into play when more than functional and nervous disorders, when even organic losses or lesions were restored, when the dead were raised, and when, supreme above all, the bands of his own death were burst asunder by his all conquering will, baffles as yet human investigation. Whether these powers were exhibits of psychic control which are only temporarily beyond human reach or are to be forever beyond it, whether in some far age our spirits are to be to that same extent *en rapport* with the Divine as was that of Christ, we can, as yet, only conjecture.

Christ's knowledge of psychic laws was unquestionably intuitive and complete. Doctor Hudson in one of his books remarks, "Christ himself was the most stupendous psychic phenomena the world has ever seen. He is the one example of a being in whom the synchronism of development, physical, intellectual, psychical and moral, was absolutely perfect. In him the objective and subjective faculties preserved at all times, under all circumstances, an exquisitely harmonious balance. His reason was always in the ascendency. He never allowed himself to be placed in such a mental condition as to render it possible for him to be dominated by a false or vicious suggestion.

He never exercised his psychic power except for the accomplishment of some good object."

To this we may add that Christ's super-physical powers, his use of natural mental means, does not detract from his claim to an exceptionally intimate touch with the Divine. We would expect him to employ as far as possible the already established, Divinely-derived facilities for accomplishing his desired results. His disciples were instructed in the same methods,—were promised like control over the forces in nature. The real proof of Christ's union with Divinity rests upon his own affirmation of it, fortified by his complete knowledge of, and dominance over, physical and mental, indeed all cosmic, forces, and his use of this knowledge and power wholly for beneficent ends. How forcibly, right here, is presented to our thought the possibility, indeed the extreme probability, that through this very open door of the sub-conscious self of Christ came the inflooding, in his matchless, love-lighted life, of the Divine Presence, forming that mystic spirit union which he claimed with the Father, and that we, it may be, will be finally privileged to enter into a like transforming companionship, by and by in the far eternity of the soul. As I have already remarked it was for this very same sympathetic blending of spirits that Christ so passionately, pathetically prayed the Father during that last memorable reunion with his disciples, "that they all may be one as thou art in me and I in thee";

it was that priceless privilege of finally becoming joint heirs with him he so confidently pledged all those who should unreservedly love him and love him to the end.

Theologians in attempting to solve the problem of Christ's personality and to account for the fact that he alone of all the unnumbered millions of spirits that have sojourned for a season on this planet never sinned, never seemingly had any consciousness of the least short-coming or need of forgiveness,—have affirmed of him a nature, a combination of attributes absolutely beyond human power to conceive. Why thus attempt the impossible? Why enter upon lines of thought that can end only in hopeless bewilderment? Dr. D. W. Forrest, a most eminent divine in Edinburgh, in his "Christ of History" has tried, and I think tried in vain, to sound these depths. He says "If Christ's personality represents a new stage in man's consciousness of God it is a stage which closes with himself. He has no more been reproduced in Christendom than he was anticipated in Judaism. There is a double break in the continuity. Naturalistic evolution fails to account for him alike in connection with what precedes and with what follows him, and it is the latter failure which is fatal." "We can see indeed that in some respects he has realized the very ideal of humanity which we cherish and long to reach, but he has not reached it along our lines, and so the inspiration of his life is enfeebled by a doubt."

"We talk too easily of Christ as our great example. The peculiarity of his attitude is that *it cannot be imitated.* Here is a note we cannot sound"—"The forms and conditions under which Christ develops are truly human, yet the personality developed though human also, is of a type of which other men do not possess the possibility, and which they cannot even *imaginably* realize, a union of characteristics which eludes definite conception."—"We may say, if we choose, that there was but one consciousness in him as there was but one personality, that of the Word made flesh."

The conclusion here reached by this most learned and world-famed theologian absolutely shuts Christ out of human conception, out of human imitation, and out of human love.

It affirms that two *egos* can be indissolubly conjoined into a single new and incomprehensible one. The testimony of our self-consciousness as I have already remarked positively confutes such a combination and consequent new creation. That our spirits are, each one of them, unique, indivisible entities is the very basic belief of our being. If Christ contrary to his professions, bore some of the deceptive semblances of a perfect humanity, the part he played of a loving and lovable leader was all a heartless farce.

Doctor Henry P. Liddon in his famed Bompton lectures affirms that "God incarnate in Christ, willed each volition of Christ's human will,"—"that from the first Christ's human will was con-

trolled by the Divine to which it is indissolubly joined,"—that "Our Lord as God and man, had two wills but the Divine originated and ruled his action," that "the person of Christ is one and indissoluble." No wonder that this eminent expositor after these most astounding statements should have felt impelled to confess that here he "touched upon the line at which revealed truth shades off into inaccessible mystery."

If Christ's human will was thus absolutely submerged, robbed from first to last of all individuality, of all freedom of choice, he on his human side must have been none other than a mere automaton without any capacity for loving self-sacrifice, without any real capacity for virtue of any sort, though the prime purpose of his mission was to body it forth in its very completeness, virtue pre-supposing susceptibility to temptation and triumph over it. Only in an environment of liberty can love live, can it ever be manifested or maintained. When the Doctor asserts finally the indissoluble and submerging union of Christ's personality with the Divine, he, it seems to me, reaches the very climax of contradiction; he, for us, shuts forever the door of hope.

C. F. Nalloth, of Oxford, in a very learned treatise entitled "The Person of our Lord and Recent Thought," concedes that Christ was a man among men, that every essential element of true human life was observable in him and has been recorded in the New Testament, claiming this as

the bed rock on which Christianity rests. Yet he adds that Christ was not a Divine Person who became a human person, but a Divine Person who took another nature in addition to his own, maintaining to the full his own original personality. He seems content with the confession simply that, "such a coalescence of two whole and perfect natures with their separate endowments into a single new personality is an unexplained mystery," but at the same time credible, failing to realize that it is something more than a mystery, that it is a downright, inconceivable contradiction, as I have previously pointed out, a resultant absolutely unthinkable by us intuitively conscious as we are of possessing, each one, a separate selfhood from which nothing can be taken and to which nothing can be added. Not only can no new *ego* result from the coalescence of other two, but neither of those two can ever be destroyed if the well known axiom of science is true, that a real entity, spiritual or otherwise, can never become a non-entity, be absolutely blotted out of being even by Divine fiat.

This author in his two closing chapters in summing up the results of his research assures us that, while the Jews' conception of God was of a solitary Personality, the Apostolic writers embraced the belief, derived as they thought from Christ's own teachings, that the Godhead had united in itself from all eternity three separate personalities, the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Spirit, that only the Son, who had been eternally pre-existent, became incarnate, "laying aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was," and became conjoined in some unexplained way with a human soul, forming thereby an absolutely new personality never afterward to be dissolved; that the Father and the Holy Spirit thus temporarily separated from the Son, continued above in the spirit-world in their original unabated glory, while the Son, after his mission of humiliation was ended returned again into the bosom of the Father, taking with him, however, a human soul with which he was conjoined and was to be conjoined forever after. This entire scheme of thought is considered by our author to be in perfect accord with the Gospel narrative, and, to our astonishment be it said, is claimed by him to be within the pale of human conception and worthy of human belief. To both of which counts we must, it seems to me, in the interest of clear thinking, enter a most emphatic dissent. Either the words of Scripture are susceptible of a widely different interpretation, or else they are but the blind gropings of uninspired and unsafe guides in the fields of faith. Such a personality as the one here depicted could never disciple a sorrowing and sinful world, being not only inconceivable by finite minds but hopelessly beyond the reach of human aspiration and of hungering human love. It would negative completely the peremptory command, which is necessarily accompanied with the

promise of the power for us to be like Christ, and would turn into mockery the prophecy that by and by we will reign as joint heirs with him in the Kingdom that is to be.

We cannot suppose for a moment that these among our great expounders of religious thought set out with the deliberate purpose of reaching such conclusions but have lamentably lost their way in the labyrinthine mazes of their own speculations. Better far for all of us to content ourselves with answers to the following plain questions: Is man of sufficient consequence to warrant Christ's coming? Was there an imperative necessity for him to come in order to rescue man from the guilt of sin and from its destructive consequences, to furnish an indispensable and attainable ideal to which to aspire? To reach this height of spiritual perfection on Christ's part was it imperative that the Divine Spirit should enter into intimate relationship with the human and were there convincing evidences in Christ's life that some such union was effected? Were Christ's concepts and conduct broad enough and pure enough to warrant us in believing that in him was actually fulfilled that type of spiritual perfection striven after and prophesied in the ceaseless processes of evolution carried on through the ages? Were Christ's sympathies apparently deep enough and wide enough to overleap every barrier of race or class prejudice, to embrace in its folds every sort and condition of men? Are

the means he adopted, that of a deeply sympathetic personality, the most effective, the only effective force for winning back a lost world? What other personage than Christ has ever appeared in all history who has ever stood these essential and searching tests?

Why set out on the bootless quest of precisely how, or to what extent the Divine and the human were conjoined in Christ. Why not rest satisfied with simply some such tentative explanation, as I have suggested of how a union was possible. Why not accept trustingly and gratefully as a fact of priceless promise that they were in some way actually conjoined, and the long sought for ideal life was somehow thus actually attained? No one thinks of questioning the equally mysterious fact, everywhere patent throughout nature, that in some way the life-forces have become so conjoined with unorganized material masses, and have attained such transforming power over them that they have risen up into myriad forms of vegetable and animal beauty to grace the landscape, people the seas, and wing the air. No one disputes the fact, at the same time no one pretends to be able to solve the mystery. The ponderous works on theology with which the shelves of the world's libraries are loaded, are most of them but the recorded failures of the keenest intellects in this domain of thought. As I have already remarked, we ought to rest content with simply establishing, as we may, these fundamental

facts, that a certain unique personage nineteen hundred years ago entered, in some way, through life's portals; that his conduct and conversation during the few troubled years of his sojourn were, as far as has been discovered, absolutely without flaw; that his system of ethics has never been superseded, or even improved upon in any essential feature; that his unparalleled altruistic love, he loving with utter self-renunication and loving to the end, has ever been, and still is, the foremost uplifting power at work in the world; that his incomparable creative personality, so perfect in its purity, so deep and broad in its sympathies as to embrace the lowliest as well as the most gifted, is fully fitted to satisfy the utmost craving of the human heart; that his coming was absolutely demanded in order that through him there might be revealed to our bewildered thought the vision of a definite, thinkable, Heavenly Father, and the blessed assurance of an endless life. Further than this we cannot go; further than this we need not. In a little volume, entitled, "No Refuge but the Truth," containing the last utterances of Goldwin Smith, one of the most brilliant and illustrious free thinkers of modern times, I find the refreshingly frank admission that "of the New Testament there remains the moral ideal of Christ, our faith in which no uncertainty as to the authors of the narratives or mistrust of them on account of the miraculous embellishment common in biographies of saints,

need materially affect. The moral ideal of Christ conquered the ancient world when the Roman, mighty in character as well as in arms, was its master. It has lived through all these centuries, all their revolutions and convulsions, the usurpation, tyranny and scandals of the Papacy. . . . At its birth it encountered alien and hostile influences, Alexandrian theosophy, Oriental asceticism, Byzantine imperialism, the theocracy engendered by the ambition of the monk, Hilderbrand, resulting eventually in the Norman raids upon England and Ireland, the civil wars kindled by Papal intrigue in Germany, the extermination of the Albigenses, the Inquisition, Alva's tribunal of blood in the Netherlands, the massacre of St. Bartholomew, the persecution of the Huguenots, and the many evils which Jesuitism has wrought. Through all this, and in spite of it all, Christian character has preserved itself, and it is still the basis of the world's best civilization. . . . Whatever may become of our creeds and of the dogma, so plainly human in origin as are some of them, we have still the Christian ideal of character, which has not yet been seriously challenged, does not depend on the miracle or dogma for its claim to acceptance and may continue to unite Christendom. The type of character set forth in the Gospel history is an absolute embodiment of love, both in the way of action and affection, crowned by the highest possible exhibition of it in an act of the most trans-

cendent self-devotion to the interest of the human race. This being the case, it is difficult to see how the Christian morality can ever be brought into antagonism with the moral progress of mankind; or how the Christian type of character can ever be left behind by the course of human development, lose the allegiance of the moral world, or give place to newly emerging and higher ideals. This type, it would appear, being perfect will be final. The moral efforts of all ages, to the consummation of the world, will be efforts to realize this character, and to make it actually, as it is potentially, universal. . . . Humanity as it passes through phase after phase of the historical movement, may advance indefinitely in excellence, but its advance will be an indefinite approximation to the Christian type."

III

By following out an entirely different line of inquiry, I find that this selfsame necessity for the coming of Christ becomes manifest, and that science thus witnesses a second time, and with added emphasis, to the reasonableness of the Christian's creed.

There is no theme of such universal interest about which there is so much confusion of thought as that of the nature of real liberty and the conditions of its maintenance. There is a multitude of forces of widely different orders at work in the world. We can not see them, and we know absolutely nothing of their real nature, and are made aware of their existence only by certain effects produced on matter. Experiment has disclosed that under certain conditions there follow certain effects. Both are uniform and unchangeable. The forces lie inert and hidden until the precise conditions are reached, and then work unswervingly in accordance with certain pre-established laws of their being. To set a force free, then, is simply to fulfill certain conditions, and thus remove whatever hinders it from rendering in its thus awakened energy an implicit obedience to the laws established over it. We can not free it from such laws, and it manifests neither power

nor disposition to free itself, to mold matter into any different form or for any different purpose than that prescribed in its Divine commission. Between the particles of water, for example, we can discover no cohesive attraction or but the slightest; yet remove a given amount of heat that now holds this force bound and hidden, and it will spring at once into full activity, and the water will become a block of solid ice. Another force, and a marvelous one, also makes its appearance. Those particles not only cohere but are arranged in set patterns along predetermined lines of symmetry, forming geometrical figures of great beauty and exactness. In the forms of snowflakes we recognize a Divine fineness of touch and flawless finish. The crystalline architect just as often as its delicate frost palaces are torn down will build them again untiringly after precisely the same models and under precisely the same conditions, so prompt is its obedience to law, so unswerving its fidelity to the plans and specifications intrusted to it by the Great Master Builder.

Pass that water as vapor through a heated tube of platinum, and the water will be at once resolved into its original hydrogen and oxygen gases, and another force still—one of repulsion—will bound into being, and so Titanic is it that you will fail to crowd the infinitesimal atoms of these gases together again though you apply twenty tons' pressure to the square inch. But touch them with fire, and they will fly back into

each other's chemical embrace instantly, and become water, as before.

We thus see that to free any of the lower forces is not to release them from law, but simply from what prevents them from acting in strictest obedience to the laws which have been established over them.

We shall find the same principles holding true in the history of other and higher forms of force. Inside the walls of a seed lies concealed a germ-fairy which remains inert, a chained captive, until definitely prescribed conditions are complied with. Place that seed in the proper environment, surround it with dew, air, soil, and sunlight, and those prison walls burst asunder, and out of the crude material which Nature furnishes the awakened and freed force constructs for itself, with an architectural skill that is marvelous in our eyes, a charming palace-home,—it may be the pure white chalice of a lily, or the richly tinted and perfumed petals of a rose, or the stalwart, storm-defying form of a forest oak. There is such perfection in its work, such profundity of thought in it, that we recognize at once that it is carrying out plans not of its own contriving, but matured in the deep councils of Jehovah. To set it free is simply to remove whatever hinders it from energizing in ways predetermined for it, from strictly obeying the laws of organization that pertain to its special sphere of work. It is never restive under Divine command. We mortals

can never tempt it, nor can we drive it into disobedience. The germ-force inside an apple seed will never fashion for us a grapevine or a sunflower, but a tree rather of a species like that which bore it. That tree will, through successive growing seasons, throw out its banners of leaves and add branch to branch, and then, when the time is ripe, burst into bloom and at last bend its boughs with fruit golden with the rich colorings of autumnal sunset skies. Through just such faithful re-embodiments by law-abiding forces have God's creative thoughts been transmitted in all their freshness down the long lapse of ages.

It will be further observed that this germinal force, if it would accomplish its purpose,—be set free and kept free—must not only be placed in its proper environment, but be absolute master of all the under forces that can in any way either help or hinder it in its work. It lifts its material right against the force of gravity, fifty, one hundred, two hundred feet into mid-air, and then summons the force of cohesion to hold it there, in some instances for long centuries together. In its laboratory, the leaf, it takes a sunbeam, and with it tears in pieces carbonic dioxide,—the most stable chemical compound known to science,—reversing the process of combustion. When you burn coal in your grate, the carbon of the coal and the oxygen of the air unite and cling together with so firm a grasp that to tear them apart again the chemist must employ the most

powerful agents, carry on the processes in his strongest vessels under most startling manifestations of light and heat, and at the last bar and bolt the refractory oxygen in a strong prison by itself. That the vegetative force accomplishes this in each one of the thousand diminutive and delicate cells of a single leaf, taking the carbon for its own use and restoring the oxygen to the air, demonstrates to us how absolute is its sovereignty over the under forces that enter into the borders of its kingdom. Its freedom, indeed its very life, is found to depend upon this sovereignty, for the very moment it relaxes its hold they rise in mad riot and, like communists, proceed to tear down into shapeless heaps of dull dust again the very glory-touched palace they have been forced to construct and maintain.

If we extend our inquiry into the phenomena of animal vitality, we shall find that liberty means the same, is won and held in precisely the same way. Within the shell of an egg, as within the walls of a seed, a germ-force lies hidden. To arouse it and set it free the egg must be kept at a predetermined temperature and for a predetermined period. These conditions none but He who prescribed them has power to change. When the time is up, the shell cracks open, and out steps a wondrously organized living creature fashioned by the germ-force out of a mass of seemingly structureless jelly.

There is such perfection in its work, such wealth

of contrivance, such profound knowledge of this complicate world, such clear vision of prophecy, we can but conclude that within its tiny windowless workshop it has been strictly following out the instructions of a Divine Master, that it has been free simply to render implicit obedience to Divine law. And in its subsequent history we learn, also, that it remains free to follow out further the Divine plan only on condition that it maintains a mastery over the under forces; that these forces are hostile to it, and will perform their new strange tasks only so long as they are held down by the strong arm of a master. There must be no divided throne, no toleration of insurgents. The vital force must reign throughout the body without a rival, or it will be trammeled in its action and eventually pushed out of being. So soon as food enters our bodies and is set flowing through certain appointed channels, it is made to undergo gradual vitalization. As it passes through the mouth into the stomach, then through the duodenum and down the smaller intestines, different solvents are poured in upon it—saliva, gastric juice, bile, pancreatic fluid, and mucous secretions. Whatever stubbornly refuses to dissolve under their influence is at once carried further on and expelled from the system. The remainder is taken up into hairlike tubes called the lacteals, and by them emptied into the thoracic duct, thence carried through the aorta to the heart. This great force pump, after first send-

ing it to the lungs for oxidation, distributes it, now thrilled with vital power, along the widely branching arterial courses everywhere, far and near, to replenish bone and muscle and cartilage and tendon and nerve fiber; for every time we move, every time we evolve a thought, we break down some tissue, and its waste must be made good from the nutritive principles in the blood. Every atom that thus loses its vitality, that has been wrested from the grasp of the organizing force and has fallen under the sway of the under chemical forces, must be driven out, or pyæmia —blood poisoning—will ensue; and if any local insurrection is not promptly put down, it will widen into revolution, and eventually end in death. To effect this expulsion, the body is interlaced with a network of canals, called lymphatics, forming an internal, decomposing, absorbent system, some of which empty into the great veins; but vast multitudes open their discharging mouths at once on the surface of the skin, three thousand to every square inch, so essential is it to afford ready and swift exit to whatever the organizing force can no longer control.

If we pursue further our investigations, and enter the region of animal instinct, so full of the marvelous, we find the same general principles prevailing. Liberty is secured and maintained in precisely the same way. Animals are born specialists. Their mental and bodily furnishings are complemental and specific. The sphere of

each is a narrow one, but it knows precisely what to do and how to do it, and has just the tools to do it with. When a bee, for example, sallies forth from its cradle, it is provided with a full business outfit—wax pouch, pollen basket, honey stomach, trowel-shaped mandibles, a tireless wing, a discriminating and most powerful scent, and complete working plans for those hexagonal storage cells that in point of capacity and economy of wax and strength of wall bear the most searching test of the differential calculus. There is not a creature that is not equipped either with some peculiar organ or with some organ peculiarly modified, accompanied with a corresponding peculiar instinctive impulse for using it. The impulse and the organ are but complemental parts of a single plan, and that plan Divine. The thinking has been done *for* the creature, not *by* it. Should it step outside its prescribed circle, fail to follow the lead of its instinct, it would become a helpless prey to hostile forces, its only strength and safety and real freedom being found in strict obedience to the laws of its organism. Should it not do what God has appointed in God's prescribed way, in God's chosen time, and with the tools God has himself furnished, it would become the helpless slave of circumstance and meet with certain and swift destruction.

Let us now direct our inquiry to our own complex spiritual life of meditations, sensibilities,

and moral choices, and see of what liberty consists, how it can be obtained, and how in these highest known forms of force it can be made a permanent possession.

When man stepped upon the scene I believe there was a radically new departure in creation; that he came endowed with that of which before there was only a semblance, a dim prophecy, on the earth; that to him alone was vouchsafed self-consciousness, the clear light of reason, perfect freedom of choice, moral discernment, and a sense of accountability. These, however, are but superadded gifts, for man is closely linked with all the lower forces, forms part of the same general plan we have been considering, indeed was designed in the Divine councils to be its grand culmination. Note the features of this plan, first in the nature and history of the soul's meditations. We find that certain predetermined conditions must be fulfilled before the currents of living thought are set free from their fountains, for, through one or more of the five senses, communication must be opened with the outside physical and mental worlds. This done, the mind thus awakened and liberated, its subsequent activity, is as we have already shown, as rigidly regular as that of the chemical or crystalline or germ-forces already considered, the processes being carried on under a system of unchangeable laws Divinely established, the prerogative of the human will reaching solely to the choice of themes,

to the selection of the fields of labor. There is no other liberty of choice than this, and even this depends for its maintenance on the control exercised over the under forces, upon the healthful condition of the delicate tissues of the brain and all the other bodily organs that are linked with it, and upon the degree of moderation secured among that eager throng of appetites, passions, and propensities which, for far-reaching moral purposes, have been placed in our keeping. We have found upon experiment that we are wholly powerless to stop the flow of thought once begun, that all we can do is to change the course of the current. We have power to direct and hold the attention, that is all. Our thoughts of meditation and reflection are generated under the laws of association and suggestion wholly independent of any direct act of the will. The bodily senses are, as I have said, the mind's only avenues of communication with the world outside. They become available solely through strict obedience to physical law, which we have no power either to abrogate or modify, and what thus comes to the mind from nature or art, social intercourse or literature, depends upon its natural receptive capacity as modified by culture. The same landscape painted on the retina of a poet's eye conveys a message of widely different import from that conveyed when it is painted on that of a plain, matter-of-fact man of affairs. The laws of suggestion

and of association will determine what that import shall be. It is under these laws that the vanished past of circumstance or of thought is called back into consciousness; it is under them that the imagination, which can combine, but not create, gathers its materials for its castles, determines how those materials shall be placed in the walls and what styles of architecture those walls shall assume. Processes of reasoning are carried on in precisely the same way. Our control over our mental operations reaches no further, as I have said, than directing and holding the attention. Here our power and our responsibility both begin and end. The measure of this power is the measure of mental liberty; with its decline begins our mental enslavement. If we concentrate our thoughts too intently and too long on any one theme, we incur the risk of losing our power of directing them into other channels and dangerously verge on monomania. On the other hand, if we indulge in inattention, suffer our thoughts to wander aimlessly, we weaken our concentrative power, and are in danger of losing it altogether, and thus sinking into mental imbecility. The golden mean of healthful self-poise lies between these two extremes. It is sadly true that this perfect intellectual liberty is rarely, if ever, reached on this planet. Bodily diseases, business perplexities, financial losses, family bereavements, passionate longings, feelings of envy, jealousy, or

revenge, the many undue excitements to which our lives are liable, have made every one of us at times victims of morbid moods, certain thoughts taking possession to the exclusion of everything else, and ruling us as with a rod of iron. How often, too, we suffer our minds to go wool-gathering, through sheer indolence or shiftlessness, until we find it well-nigh impossible to call our thoughts in from their aimless wanderings and give needful heed to the stern duties of the hour!

If what I have stated of our intellectual life be true—and any one can readily verify it by recalling his own experiences—thoughts are evolved and grouped about any chosen theme with as perfect regularity, as strict conformity to unchangeable law, as is observed when salt atoms crystallize, or the structureless contents of an egg are changed into the organized body of a bird. To set mental force free, then, and keep it free, is not to release it from Divine law, but, by fulfilling certain prescribed conditions and by securing and maintaining sovereignty over the under forces, to remove whatever hinders it from energizing in those precise modes established at the first by Him whose fiat brought it into being.

Within the soul lie dormant, also, wondrous germinal affections and aspirations, purposes and far-reaching hopes, waiting compliance with certain fixed conditions before their fetters fall and they begin to grow into the permanent moral traits of the soul. There is required for this

quickening the gentle influences of sunbeams of sympathy. To the joy-light of a mother's smile, to the distilling tears of her quick pity or of her overburdened solicitude, to the brooding acts of her ever-watchful care, to the tender tones of her affection, the spirit promptly responds. The greater the confidence inspired in the child, the deeper is the intimacy and the more free and frequent the interchange of thought and feeling; and if this close spiritual union is continued, if the mother holds the confidence and love of the child through the years, she becomes to him a heroine, a model, an inspiration, her influence reaching down into his innermost desire, vitalizing his whole spiritual being. He tells her everything, and in return receives the smile and tear and counseling word. Under the law of spiritual assimilation, which is dominant when soul is linked to soul, he gradually grows into her moral likeness. Here is no compulsion, no deadening of nature. His whole being is roused rather into intensest life, into the fullest freedom, her sympathetic response calling out the deepest emotion and motive. Reserve and indifference are all gone. The charm of her personal presence is farthest removed from a feverish fascination. His soul is simply quickened and freed as is the germ-force in the seed when planted in a sun-kissed soil.

These promptings to hero-worship, this quick response to sympathy, this molding of the char-

acter by the subtile influences that go out from intimately communing souls, this directive power of the stronger spirit over the weaker and less mature, this enlargement of liberty, this quickening of impulses, this wondrous vitalization, thus begun in the child through companionship with the mother, is repeated over and over again in the intimacies of after-life. The friendships and love unions of the soul, the choosing of great leaders in peace and war, in church and state, the canonizing of the objects of affection, the wonderful transforming power these chosen heroes of hearts have displayed in the world, the intense enthusiasm, the profound devotion they have enkindled, the quickening they have caused of the world's pulse, show beyond question that it is a universal and deep-seated instinct of the heart to idealize those who have won their way to intimate companionship, or have become enthroned as loved leaders, and that, because of this instinct, hero-worship has ever been, and will ever be, under the law of spiritual assimilation, the greatest plastic power at work in the world.

As in the intellectual life we can by the will direct and fix the attention, but not stop the flow of thought or change the modes of its generation under laws of association and suggestion, so in the spiritual life we can choose who shall be our intimate companions, to whom we will uncurtain our inner lives. But the choice once made, the intimacy once begun, we shall inevitably grow

into each other's likeness, the stronger, more mature spirit, the one of more pronounced positive personality, having the greater plastic power. Just so soon as the free interchange begins, the process of assimilation begins under laws that are immutable.

As soon as the soul feels vitalizing power from communion with a pure and benign spirit, it at once sets about self-mastery, control over all the under forces, the passions, appetites, propensities, every form of selfishness whose tendency is to enslave, and the growth is upward and outward toward a likeness to the superior and freer spirit. The converse is equally true. Intimate communion with lower spirits, in whom ignoble thoughts are cherished, will result through the same law of assimilation, if continued, in increased enslavement and finally in moral death.

In view of these laws that thus control in the development of character, is it not very significant that the historic Christ asked to be received into intimacy, to become the chosen hero of hearts? As the affections cannot be enforced, freedom being their vital air, he has ventured no further than to stand at the door and knock, asking simply to have us uncurtain to him our inner lives. Is it not significant that he thus manifestly craves our affections, assures us that he is deeply interested in every worthy thing that interests us, offers in return his loving presence, and desires all barriers to be forever torn away?

Is it not because he is profoundly aware that when he is thus received into intimacy, soul touching soul, the germinal spiritual forces will at once begin to build up character, through processes of assimilation, under the immutable laws of growth? Does he not evidently desire this close relationship, that he may transform us as soil is transformed into rosebuds, and eggs into plumed songsters, knowing full well that, if we once let him into our hearts and cherish his presence there, the growth into his likeness will as inevitably ensue as, when we drop the seed in rich, moist, sun-warmed soil, or place the egg in a befitting atmosphere, a plant or an animal is built up by the constructive forces within? Is not such a world-wide need a most sure prophecy of the coming of some one fitted and willing to supply that need? What pilgrim spirit so worthy of a welcome as the historic Christ has ever visited this earth, and knocked, and waited at the door of the human heart? What spirit so worthy of admission to its most sacred inner sanctuary? What one into the charmed circle of whose presence it has been so distinguished a privilege to enter, who has come so admirably fitted in so many ways to draw all men unto him? Who but he could answer to this need, and thus fulfill the prophecy? He has, in the first place, shown an interest in us under such varied and trying circumstances that we can never for a moment question its genuineness, its depth, or its permanency. He

has given evidence that he is moved not merely by some general feeling of friendliness for the erring, suffering, longing multitudes that throng this planet, but assures us that he knows each one personally, and that, because he does, he stands ready to brave danger, endure fatigue, suffer privation, and actually desires to meet us face to face, to look through our kindling or tear-dimmed eyes in upon our very souls, to watch the sunshine and shadow of our most secret thoughts. He wants to be welcomed warmly, to have us feel that everything that is of interest to us is of interest to him. We all know that no intimate companionship can exist without an assurance of this personal attachment; that just so soon as we suspect that any of our earthly friends have lost their relish for our society, listen listlessly and grow wooden in their voices when they make reply, a deathlike chill, a spirit of reticence, comes over us, the meetings grow less frequent, the conversation drops into empty, conventional commonplace, the friendship cools into formal acquaintance and, it may be, terminates in bitter estrangement. Who has not had the iron thus enter his soul? There is always more or less of prudent reserve in earthly friendships, a questioning of how far one may presume upon the affections of another, so painfully mindful are we of our limitations. No such barriers can ever exist between us and Christ. He takes pains to assure us that there is not one of such low degree as to

be unworthy of his personal regard. Our deficiencies, however great, in bodily attractions, or social rank, or worldly possessions, in mental endowment or culture or conversational power, need not in the least discourage us from aspiring to intimacy with him, for he asks for our loving trust and fellowship, not because of what we are now, but of what we may become, ages hence, under the marvelously transforming power of his personal presence. Here is a vantage-ground no earthly friend can have. Christ looks at us with the piercing eye of a God in the white light of eternity. The grand possibilities of the spiritual germ-forces locked up within us are definitely outlined in his far glance of prophecy, as if they already were accomplished facts. He can see the flashing diamond into which the loose dust of carbon at his feet can be compressed. He can see the delicately fashioned flower petal, with its faultless lines of grace and exquisite coloring, into which the rude elements in soil and air may be molded at the talismanic touch of life. To us it does not yet appear what we shall be. He, however, not only sees, but assures us that he sees, even in the humblest of those who truly love him here, the coming heirs and joint heirs with him to fadeless crowns. Under his plastic power, through this law of spiritual assimilation, he is confident that he can so develop our possibilities, if we will seek his society, as eventually to render our companionship with him both delightful and

lasting. What soul does not stand in pressing need of such a friend? Through whom else can such a need be met?

We are assured not only that Christ is thus personally interested in us, but that he knows us through and through. In his public ministry he frequently demonstrated his power to discern the most secret intents of the heart. How imperfectly we know our friends, or they us! We try to draw aside the hiding curtains, but cannot; and because of this unavoidable partial concealment, the interchange of sympathy is seldom, if ever, full and free. This element of embarrassment never enters into our friendship with Christ.

Again he, by his self-sacrificing spirit, inspires in us a degree of confidence our earthly companions never can. We feel perfectly safe in trusting our most cherished secrets with him, fear of coming estrangement or of any advantage ever being taken of anything spoken in confidence never once entering our thought. By his absolutely unselfish devotion he naturally awakens in his true disciples a love transcending every other. This explains his saying, "He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me." He felt that he had those special gifts which brought him naturally into closer personal relations with those worthy of him; that he had by his sacrifices commended himself to their confiding love more fully than any other. He desired only his natural place in our hearts. His

purpose was not to supplant home affections, but to so vitalize and sanctify them that they would not only weather the storms of time, but outlast the grave. This supreme affection, this complete self-surrender, in that it is cordial and according to nature, instead of enslaving, liberates us. Do we curtail our freedom when we give our hearts to our friends, our heroes, or our saints? Are not our souls thus stirred as never before, all their forces aroused into most pleasurable activity? Indeed, only a Christ can truly set us free; for in none other do we find so perfect an ideal, a life without a flaw, a living revelation of God's yearning love. With no other one can we come into such close personal relations, whose heartfelt interest in each one of us is so unmistakable, whose insight into our inner selves is so complete, to whom we feel that our intimate friendship will be so welcome and so unselfishly cherished. We are constitutionally social beings. We cannot stand alone. Companionship and hero-worship are the inborn demands of our nature. The purer and more unselfish the one whom we admit to intimacy, the more complete through his influence becomes our self-mastery; the formative spiritual powers within us the more sovereign over the under forces and the more subject to the upper and Divine. How imminent the danger to which we are exposed, how imperative the necessity for the power of a Christ's personal presence!

We have seen how the under chemical forces within our physical organisms are slaves, not willing servitors, and that they seem to be on the watch for any weakening of the sovereign vitality; for so soon as it in the least loses its control, they break out into open rebellion, bent on devastation and death. Hostile forces also wait outside, ready to rush in at any unguarded portal. The air is full of the eggs and seeds of parasites, which find a rich nexus in any part not thoroughly vitalized to hatch out, and multiply by myriads, into miasmic fevers and contagious diseases. Scientists have discovered sixty-six or more different species of these parasitic foes that prey on human flesh. Nothing but a most vigorous vitality can repel and destroy these attacking armies.

In our intellectual life we have found ourselves equally exposed, symptoms of disorder constantly appearing,—lack of power to hold or direct the attention, thoughts crowding themselves into undue prominence, loss of mental perspective, a weakened memory, a confused reason, a wild and wayward fancy. But especially in our emotional and moral nature have we realized the need of the watchful eye and the strong hand of a master. This supremacy can be maintained only by a willing obedience to the higher law of the conscience and the revealed will of God through the inspiriting, vitalizing power of Christ's pure life and sympathetic presence.

Philosophy and history both affirm this. Every individual from the first, as we have remarked, needs outside assistance. Every mind and heart must have kindred minds and hearts of wider culture and higher virtues to instruct and incite. A recluse from birth would be a drooling idiot or a wild bushman. History has no record of any tribe of savages ever lifting itself unaided into civilization. Surely the moral world is now too seriously diseased, and has been as far back as we have any knowledge, to throw off the incubus by the strength of its own vitality. All are enslaved, and all may be freed, but only through some life-touch with a Christ. Under his benign influence the progress of the world is toward this higher sovereignty. Sciences and arts are discovering and conquering and utilizing Nature's forces. Diseases are becoming more thoroughly understood, and are being checked by more efficient remedies, or guarded against through wiser sanitary regulations. Literatures and schools are throwing off the incubus of ignorance and superstition, governments are advancing toward larger social and religious liberty, and there is to-day among the leading peoples of the earth a more free and healthful development than ever before of that individuality which is a Divine and priceless gift to every man. It is to Christ's influence we can look, and to that alone, for a final and full unfettering of the human spirit from the enthralling

power of all the under and the outer forces.

What a proffer Christ has here made us—a confidential companionship with himself, the uplifting power of his personal presence, the nourishing sunshine of his sympathy, privilege to grow into his likeness! We are at a loss to explain this condescension, except on the ground of our immortality and his far look into the eternal years.

His invitation is to every one. In this universality of sympathy and power to help he stands alone. He comes to those of sick and bruised bodies, saying to them: "I too have passed through like bitter experiences, have been racked and torn with pain, and know how hard it is to bear, but I also know what wholesome discipline there is in it, what power to purify. Keep good cheer, for 'whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth.' "

His invitation is to the neglected, whose hearts have been saddened by lack of appreciation, who feel themselves walled out from those whose love and companionship they crave. Upon their wounded spirits his words fall like balm. "I came to my own, and my own received me not. My good deeds were evil spoken of. Despite my oft-repeated explanations, my miracles of power and acts of love, I was lamentably misunderstood and maligned until after my death. When my dark trial hour came, those whom I had chosen as my disciples and bosom friends forsook me and fled. Wait patiently, for I can assure you there

will be a glorious uncurtaining by and by."

His invitation is to the poor, the unsuccessful, the persecuted, those whose plans have failed from causes which they could not control, those who have struggled with a worthy purpose but struggled against a resistless tide. His earthly career had many things in common with theirs, too, for he was by his contemporaries very naturally pronounced a failure. He added nothing to his wordly stores, had not a roof to cover him, gained no social position, was unpopular with the powerful and rich. He endured privation, won none of the world's reputed prizes. His very faithfulness blocked his way to personal preferment. His persistent determination to reclaim the fallen, rebuke sin, courageously to state and stand by his convictions, finally cost him his fair fame, brought down upon him the anathemas of the very rulers of the synagogue, and at last nailed him to the cross, to suffer and die between convicted thieves.

His message is to the tempted. He had many a desperate struggle with appetite and passion. He fought no mock battles. His soul was racked with many misgivings at thought of the terrible ordeal through which he knew he was destined to pass, and these misgivings never permanently left him until the very morning of his crucifixion, after an all-night agony in Gethsemane.

He comes to those who mourn, with a heart

that has felt bereavement, with eyes that have filled with tears for the dead. He comes to the timid, the sick and dying, this time with reassuring power, for in his many miracles he proved himself Lord over Nature. Her forces were ready servitors of his sovereign will. By his touch, fevers fled, the lame walked, lepers were cleansed. At his word, disordered minds were blessed with returning reason, and even the dead heard his call and felt the thrill of life again. From the grave he himself rose victor. He proved that he indulged in no idle boast when he said, "I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it again." Christ is thus not only a sympathizing but an all-powerful friend. Whatever the nature of the need, he can supply it. There is no pain or danger or disaster from which he cannot free us, and will when it is best. Just as soon as we turn toward him with loving confidence, and say, "Thy will be done," whatever chills or cripples or enslaves our spirits, clogs their powers, or hinders their development, melts away in the sunshine of his sympathy. No exigency for help so pressing that he is not able to meet it. He thus becomes our great liberator, rock of defense, inspiration, comforter. He enables us to beat down the restive under forces which lie in wait to enslave and destroy. He does not free us from the pain, but from its power to dull the sensibilities; not from poverty and care, but from their tendency

to narrow and harden; not from calumny, but from the maddening poison in its sting; not from disappointment, but from the hopelessness and bitterness of thought which it so often engenders.

We attain unto this perfect liberty when we rise superior to untoward circumstances, triumph over the pain and weakness of disease, over unjust criticism, the wreck of earthly hopes, over promptings to envy, every sordid and selfish desire, every unhallowed longing, every doubt of God's wisdom and love and kindly care, when we rise into an atmosphere of undaunted moral courage, of restful content, of child-like trust, of holy, all-conquering calm. We should welcome the discipline God sees fit to send. Christ could not escape the cross and wear the crown. It is enough for the servant that he be as his master, the disciple as his Lord. We must fight, at times fight desperately, and wear battle scars. In that ever-memorable farewell, Christ said, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth." This was the fruit of struggle, the calm that comes only from the perfect obedience of consecrated love.

How priceless that trustful serenity in the midst of life's reverses and dangers and cares and separations! How does the freed soul rise on widespread pinions till the clouds of time roll their wind-driven billows beneath it, and it basks in the bright smile of God's promise! Do you

ask, doubtingly, Who have attained to this liberty? Many have: those early Christians, who, driven by relentless persecution, dwelt in the catacombs of Rome; martyrs, who died with songs on their lips; the sainted Stephen, whose face shone as the face of an angel; Paul, whose ringing words of cheer have for nineteen centuries been heard round the world. All may. It is offered to all. Life's storms have broken over the souls of men, and will break again, but a Christ has proffered an all-sheltering love.

A flood of light is here thrown on two most remarkable sayings of this marvelous Being: "If the Son, therefore, shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed"; "He that loveth father or mother, son or daughter, more than me is not worthy of me." Only Christ then can give true freedom, and he only to those who are worthy of him; and those only are worthy who make to him a complete self-surrender, according to him a supremacy in heart and life over every affection and aspiration known to earth. The revelations made by the science, not only of physics, but of metaphysics, to which we have here called attention, enables us to see now how self can be set free by an absolute surrender of self to another, provided that other is not only perfect man but man in closest touch with a loving God, this apparent contradiction proving to be but apparent, the assertions to be in complete accord, betokening a most intimate acquaintance with the

deep foundation principles on which this world is built.

In what perfect keeping with the exigencies of this world-organism is the fact that he who assumes to be its very central heart should demand that every soul be in this threefold attitude toward him of implicit obedience, full consecration, and devout trust! He stands alone among all the leaders of mankind in the sweeping nature of his exactions. No radicalism of any religious zealot ever equaled this. He accepts nothing less than an unconditional surrender of the entire being, with all its loves and longings. He recognizes no limitations and no exemptions.

His rewards are as unprecedented as his demands. They are embodied in that last strange bequest to his disciples to which we have alluded, "My peace I give unto you, not as the world giveth." He makes no promise of any of earth's prizes, its wealth, or ease, or power, or social preferment, or trumpeted fame. but has the courage and candor to disclose to them that poverty and contumely, scourgings and imprisonments, tortures and death itself, await them; that he sends them forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Who that has not the outlook of one Divinely informed would hope thus to disciple a world; would demand such devotion and in return offer simply an inward peace? His call is as wide as the race, and lasting as the soul's eternal years.

If we believe Christ simply a man without

being in some unprecedented way intimately linked with and transformed by the Divine Spirit we can but regard with the profoundest amazement his unparalleled assurance, but if thus conjoined, then in the revealing light of the science of physics and of metaphysics we can perceive how he could consistently demand nothing less; that only when the soul is brought into such relationship with himself can the vast plan of providence, which has been unfolding since the dawn of time, reach final consummation. Do you ask why the obedience, the consecration, and the trust must be so absolute? It is, as I have attempted to show, this very feature of the demand which stamps it Divine. Christ has in his own history exemplified the very spirit he enjoins, not only in his human soul, but even in the Divine Spirit that spoke through him as well—a view rarely understood, still more rarely entertained. He requires of us no more than he exacts even from his higher self. It is a very common error, yet a very grave one, to suppose that the great foundation principles of moral obligation had no existence until God created and established them, that his acts are wholly arbitrary, that he is amenable to no law, but is and always has been a law unto himself. It seems to me that on careful reflection it must be perceived that there can be no moral life unless there exists a moral law, a fixed standard of right by which to gauge motive and test character; that as far back as there

was any moral quality in God's acts there must have been this fixed standard to which he made his acts conform; that these principles, this standard, must have been coexistent with his ever living self; that the Bible in its moral code has simply revealed and applied to the various exigencies of the complicate inter-relationships of human life these self-existent principles, that these principles God could not only not originate, but not even change in the slightest degree; that by no pronunciamento of his can loving self-sacrifice, chaste desire, dauntless fidelity to inward conviction, be degraded into revolting forms of vice; nor, on the other hand, can cold, selfish greed, falsehood, lust, or murderous hate be exalted and transformed into the nobilities and manly virtues of the soul; that when he brought us into being he could do no more than endow us with moral discernment and with perfect freedom of choice, leaving us utterly characterless, and necessarily so, when we came from his creative hand; and that the responsibility of the nature of our future moral development rests wholly with our own sovereign selves, according as we choose to place our lives in harmony or in discord with these eternal principles of the true and the good, in harmony or in discord with this all-reaching, unchangeable law of order in the great world-organism of which he has kindly purposed that we shall form a part.

Availing ourselves thus of the light of modern

science in our attempted explanation of the eternal destiny of souls, we can but conclude, first, that whoever stubbornly rebels against these inexorable systems of law under which every one is necessarily placed at the very birth of being, and persists in that rebellion, which he has the power to do; whoever, in other words, refuses to hold in vitalizing subjection the under forces of his most complicate nature, and to yield lovingly to the vitalizing influence of the upper and Divine, will under these very laws be finally pushed out of his present state of self-conscious being and lose forever his gift of sovereignty. If the body, the intellect, and the spirit are, as we have attempted to show, not only organisms in themselves, but parts of the great world-organism, dissonance, disorder in any particular, will, unless arrested, spread confusion throughout the whole, and end eventually in total wreck.

Science thus reveals the awful fact of an impending doom of utter annihilation of self-consciousness and sovereignty to every incorrigible rebel in God's realm, for the very exigencies of the case demand this, the very fact that we are organized units, and as such are composed of complemental parts, having an intimate interplay and interdependence, and that we are parts of still wider organisms, and they of wider still, until the bounds of the human race are reached, and it may be the very bounds of being, as the planets and solar systems and sun clusters of the

universe circle at last orbit within orbit, in one vast sweep, in grand majestic harmony around God's central throne.

We witness every day the body as an organism passing under the doom of annihilation through the disintegrating power of the under forces which have broken away from the control of the upper. Faculty after faculty of the intellect we have seen disappear through violation of the laws of mind until finally all evidence of any continued thought-life ceases. Science has furnished a strong presumption at least, through the analogies of Nature, that the soul also is organic, and must depend for continued self-conscious existence on the harmonious interplay of its parts, on the maintenance of its mastery over the under forces, and its implicit and ready obedience to the upper. There are, as we have seen, no other conditions of liberty, and without liberty there can be no perpetuity of any organic life. It is now a rapidly growing belief among Bible-students that the final annihilation of conscious selfhood, accompanied with sovereign self-control, of the incorrigibly wicked is revealed in God's Word as well as in his works. Converts to this creed are now numbered by tens of thousands in the Christian churches. I was surprised to find, when my attention was called to it, how all the passages bearing on this subject were susceptible of such an interpretation, and that the vast majority of them fairly excluded any other.

The symbols used are symbols of destruction, and not of eternal torment. It is said that the wicked are cast out where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched. But the worm and the fire are instruments of annihilation, and the obvious meaning is that their work will go on uninterruptedly until it is complete, until the organisms on which they are delegated to feed have been utterly consumed. While there is food for the worm or fuel for the fire they will gnaw and burn; but, as the processes of destruction are progressive, that on which they prey is constantly diminishing, and unless there is being wrought a perpetual miracle of creation, as in the liver of the fabled-Prometheus on which the vulture fed, an end must surely come. This figure, and indeed all other figures in the Sacred Record illustrating the final condition of those who persist in their disobedience, are robbed of their rhetorical force, are carried wholly out of their natural meaning unless this be their prophecy of doom.

I would not be understood as considering it possible for a human spirit to be banished, even by divine power, absolutely out of all being—be reduced to nothingness, but only out of a state of organized, sovereign, self-conscious being; for scientists, as indeed all careful thinkers, while conceding that any particular form of existence may be made to permanently pass away, regard it as axiomatic that an entity can never come up

out of nonentity, nor ever be returned to it.

Many entertain the belief, born of hope it may be, that God is too kind and sympathetic to suffer any soul to be lost. Unquestionably he would rescue every one had he the power. The disintegration of the body he can arrest by sheer force of will, but the decay of the moral nature is the sad consequence of the exercise of a will as sovereign as his own. Without its consent he cannot stop the process except by destroying the life, for, as I have said, moral life is made up of sovereign acts of will. Liberty is its vital air. God can compel our obedience, but so soon as compulsion begins responsibility ends. The soul after that becomes a characterless machine. Unless divine love can win back the rebel, his moral life must gradually die out, in accordance with spiritual laws which it is not in the compass of even God's power to alter or annul. Though God cannot stay this destructive process against our will, however his sympathetic heart may be wrung with grief, as was Christ's when he wept over favored yet fated Jerusalem, still, while there survives the faintest spark of hope of the soul's reclaim, his spirit will no doubt strive with all its kindliest influences. I cannot see why the mere fact of physical death should be a signal to cease. Not until the heart has grown stony in sin, not until moral death has come, will God's hope perish, and his pleading Spirit, with all its loving patience, be finally grieved away. Until then he

will stand and knock at the door of the human heart.

Many profound scholars now affirm that it is nowhere revealed in the Sacred Scriptures that the body's death ends the soul's probation. Surely sound philosophy does not teach it. But that probation will certainly have an end sometime—before death it may be for some souls, after death for others—the immutable laws of spiritual growth and decay have most certainly decreed.

Thus, from the phenomena and principles which the researches of science have brought to light, we are irresistibly led to the conclusion that in some far future all discords will cease throughout God's universe; that all souls which stoutly stand out against his overtures of love, refuse to come into harmony with the great world-organism of which they were purposed to form a part, withstand the spirtual vitalizing forces whose mission it is to organize all things into a divine order, will, through this perverse persistence, be finally pushed out of self-conscious, moral being; that the time is coming when that notable prophecy will be fulfilled which declares that before Christ, who became obedient unto death, who is the perfect embodiment of the divine order and of the divine love, the central heart, the mysterious vitalizing power of this vast world-organism —that before this Immanuel, the Mighty Counselor, the Prince of Peace, in that great day when

the Divine plans shall have reached their final consummation, all knees shall bow and all tongues confess.

Two thousand years ago there appeared in Palestine a Jew artisan. He lived a life without a flaw, a life free from the slightest taint of selfishness, marked by no effort to secure wealth or ease, political or social preferment. He came into the closest sympathetic touch with the poor, the despised, the forsaken, and that touch was to save. There was no interest of self he did not sacrifice with noble gladness to free souls from the guilt of sin and the power of it. The French skeptic Renan testifies in his world-famed Life of Jesus: "In him is condensed all that is lofty and good in our nature. . . . Never has any man made the interests of humanity predominate in his life over the littleness of inordinate self-love so much as he. Devoted without reserve to his idea, he sub-ordinated everything to it to such a degree that toward the end of his life the universe no longer existed for him. Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will grow young without ceasing. His legend will call forth tears without end; his sufferings will melt the noblest hearts; all ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there is none born greater than Jesus."

Though his youth was passed amid most con-

tracted surroundings in a despised country town, and though he was of Jewish parentage, yet he proved himself absolutely free from the proverbial narrowness and the petty prejudices of his race. His sympathies and his plans of reform were as wide as the world. In the three short years of his public ministry in a degenerate and superstitious age this young mechanic taught a system of ethics which has borne the test of the keenest criticism of the world for nineteen centuries, and to-day stands abreast of the world's best thought, quickens it, leads it, uplifts it, glorifies it still. The present advanced forms of civilization are the outcome of the leavening influences that went out from his life and lips.

He spoke in bold, uncompromising denunciation against all forms of sin, however intrenched behind social custom or church sanction, or bolstered up by wealth or power. He paid the forfeit for his fidelity with his agonies on the cross. His utterances and his conduct were pervaded with an unwonted, awe-inspiring spirit of command. He repeatedly claimed with unperturbed assurance that he was Divine, and never once weakened with a single word of retraction when the powerful leaders of the synagogue confronted him before the multitude with the charge of blasphemy, but simply reasserted his claim and calmly pointed to the proof. It is a remarkable fact that Christ never confessed any imperfection in himself. No prophet or teacher but has

frankly granted his own shortcomings. The most holy are the most sensitive in this regard, most self-accusing. Christ said positively that he always did the will of the Father. He boldly challenged his enemies to convince him of sin. Either Christ believed himself to be morally perfect, or was guilty of intolerable presumption. He asserted of himself not only perfection, but Divine intimacy, and promised that eventually his true disciples should enter into as intimate relationship with the Father and be as completely transformed by the power of love and be raised at last to as high a spiritual level as himself.

In his person, in his surroundings, in the incidents and spirit of his ministry, in the manner of his death, he fulfilled with startling accuracy those old Messianic prophecies that had been handed down in the sacred books of his people. It is true that only a few of that race, which has been marvelously preserved till this hour, notwithstanding it lies scattered and peeled among the nations, have ever accepted him as their long-looked-for deliverer, for it was a spiritual, and not a temporal, kingdom he came to found; it was from their personal sins, and not from the heavy Roman yoke, he sought to free his people, yet they have watched for some other one to come while nineteen centuries have one by one crept slowly by, and watched in vain.

In the facts which have been brought to light through scientific investigations we have abun-

dant evidences, as I have attempted to show, that the human race is of sufficient importance to warrant just such a divine mission as Christ's, and that through this alone can that vast scheme of life succeed on whose unfolding through the untold ages God has already lavished such wealth of creative thought.

Christ must have been either a myth, or an impostor, or a lunatic, or else have been in some intimate union with God himself. The theory that Christ is a myth, the product of the thought-accretions of some reverent, ignorantly worshiping period of antiquity, a demigod like Hercules, the product of dim, distorting tradition—a theory put forth by the Bauer school of philosophy—has long since been abandoned by all historical critics of any standing as utterly untenable. Weisacker of Tubingen and Harnack of Berlin, though Bauer's modern successors, are distinctively not his disciples. Listen to the deliberate judgment of one of the most pronounced and keenest skeptics of modern times, John Stuart Mill: "Whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left: a unique figure, not more unlike all his precursors than all his followers, even those who had the direct benefit of his personal teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ as exhibited in the Gospels is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of his followers. The

tradition of followers suffices to insert any number of marvels and may have inserted all the miracles which he is reputed to have wrought. But who among his disciples, or among their proselytes, was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee, as certainly not St. Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies were of a totally different sort; still less the early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good that was in them was all derived, as they always professed that it was derived, from a higher source."

Napoleon, imprisoned on the rock of St. Helena, when conversing as was his habit, about the great men of the ancient world, and comparing himself with them, turned, it is said, to Count Montholon with the inquiry, "Can you tell me who Jesus Christ was?" The question was declined, and Napoleon proceeded, "Well, then I will tell you. Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and I myself have founded great empires, but upon what did these great creations of genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded his empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for him. I think I understand something of human nature, and I tell you all these were men, and I am a man. None else is like him. Jesus Christ was more than man. Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man towards

the unseen that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across the chasm of eighteen hundred years Jesus Christ makes a demand which is beyond all others difficult to satisfy; he asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart. He will have it entirely to himself. He demands it unconditionally, and forthwith his demand is granted. Wonderful! In defiance of time and space the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, becomes an annexation to the empire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in him experience that remarkable supernatural love towards him. The phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength, nor put a limit to its range. This is it which strikes me most. I have often thought of it. This is it which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ."

The late Goldwin Smith frankly acknowledged that "Christ's personality cannot be questioned. It is attested by the Roman historians Tacitus and Suetonius (and by Pliny as well), who mention his religious leadership and crucifixion. "No imagination could have created such a character with a religious and ethical system to cor-

respond. To his personal influence through nineteen centuries, and devotion still, there is absolutely no parallel in history—Before them pales the glory of Sakyanouni and of Mahomet."

If the Gospel narrative is a work of fiction rather than a statement of plain fact it should be regarded as the "literary miracle of the ages." The Christ-character, if the product of an uninspired imagination, stands an absolutely unrivaled masterpiece of creation, clearly beyond the scope even of the genius of a Shakespeare. Not in all the world's literatures, ancient or modern, is there a record of such a sublime, conceptual triumph, a fact which unmistakably evinces that it lies utterly beyond the reach of human attainment, and yet we are indebted for the record left us, out of a remote antiquity, of the life and sayings of this so unique a personage, chiefly to the pens of plain, common-place peasants, of meager education, of ordinary mental caliber, of no literary experience or aptitude, of no exalted ideals of life and morals. But, so convincing is the verisimilitude of the tale, mankind has long since ceased to deny that Christ actually lived the life, developed the character, made the claims, taught the precepts, died the death, and finally, as crown and finish, won the signal victory over the very grave itself, as substantially set forth in the Gospel records. What other than just such a triumphal ending can we possibly imagine would have been at all in con-

sonance with such a claim and such a career? However, if we once but concede the actual fact of his resurrection we are logically compelled to believe that in some way, though undefinable and inconceivable by us, his human spirit was certainly and most intimately linked with the Divine. In his resurrection Christ manifested a power not only to lay down his life, for love's sake, but even to take it again, and if we feel forced by seemingly irrefragable evidence to accept this final crowning miracle, at what marvel in the record need our faith falter? All other displays of his transcendency, however astounding, for which he is accredited, are but natural and necessary concomitants of such a triumph. None of them, surely, are out of keeping with his manifested spirit of supreme beneficence, none detract from his august dignity, none are out of harmony with the purity and elevation of his thought, while all are inextricably interwoven with it.

So essential is it for us, now and here, to note how irrefragable are the proofs of this crowning act in Christ's career, evincing his supreme Lordship over life and death, I will venture to enumerate them as briefly as may be, as I have elsewhere made mention of them in treatment of another theme.

According to the Gospel record Christ after his passion convinced his disciples that he was veritably alive by many infallible proofs, being

seen of them forty days and speaking of the things of the Kingdom; one hundred and twenty persons witnessing his final ascension. Among the infallible proofs were their meeting him face to face, and holding familiar intercourse. As they had been on most intimate terms with him for years and had become thoroughly familiarized with the tones of his voice and his general appearance it could not have been a case of mistaken identity. Having frequently and most unexpectedly met him after his death and talked with him under widely varying circumstances they could not have been victims of any hallucination, of mistaking for his presence some figment of an inflamed fancy. The simple, even tenor of their lives, and the calm, unadorned character of their writings disprove any strain in them of wild fanaticism. Their frankly confessed ignominious desertion of him in his last most trying hours, shows how utterly unexpected was his reappearance in their midst.

No possible inducement can be imagined for them to steal his body and falsely proclaim him risen and persist in such a fraud by a continued public preaching based on its verity, for they could not possibly reap any personal advantage in thus linking themselves with a condemned crucified criminal, but would be placing themselves in perpetual peril. There is nothing to show that they were bold, cunning adventurers capable by natural endowment or education or

social standing to successfully palm off such a cheat on the world; but everything that they, ordinary, plain people, stood ready to die, if need be, in attestation of their belief.

St. Paul, once their scoffing persecutor, wrote in one of those four epistles, whose genuineness no critics dispute and which together constitute what is denominated the fifth gospel, twenty years after Christ's death, that as many as five hundred brethren at one time had seen Christ again alive, the greater number of whom were, as he affirms, still dwelling in the midst of the Corinthians to whom the Epistles were addressed and who were ready to vouch for the fact. How easily Paul could have been confuted and put to open shame had this not been true and notorious. These early disciples imperiled not only their own lives but those of innocently believing multitudes by this their uncompromising advocacy of a risen Christ. No hardships or perils, nothing but death itself seemed capable of silencing them. They endured to the end, cheerfully forfeiting everything that the world holds dear, evidently sustained solely by an inward consciousness of truth. How otherwise are we to explain the transformation afterward wrought in these frightened disciples, so deeply disappointed in their hopes of the coming of a Messiah to break the Roman yoke, from most ordinary, plodding peasants into strenuous advocates of a system of ethics and religious faith that is so marvelously free

from the narrow, shortsighted Jewish prejudices of the times, of such broad catholicity, of such sound philosophy that the peoples on this planet in all their nineteen centuries of advancing enlightenment have not yet outgrown it; how otherwise are we to explain this marvelous transformation except on the ground of these disciples having come into actual, constant touch throughout their self-sacrificing ministry with the mind and heart of their risen and ever-living Lord?

No wonder that when the listening crowds, as Luke writes, "saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men they marveled and took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus.

The famous Dr. Arnold of Rugby testifies, "I have been used for many years to study history and examine and weigh evidence, and I know of no fact which has been proved by better and fuller evidence than that Christ died and rose again from the dead."

There is now a school of textual critics of unquestioned acumen, of profound learning, who, after almost unprecedented painstaking research have reached the conclusion that there is no satisfactory evidence in the Scriptures that Christ's tomb was found empty on Easter morning and that his crucified body was raised to life, but rather that it was his spiritual body which at sundry times had been seen by his disciples. They contend that Paul, whose earliest epistles

date twenty-seven years after Christ died and fifteen before the Book of Mark, the earliest of the synoptical gospels, was written, testifies simply to the fact of sundry apparitions. In his argument on immortality he certainly does not predict a resurrection of the body which we lay away in the tomb. "Thou sowest not the body which shall be." "There is sown a natural body; there is raised a spiritual body." Out of the disintegrating seed there springs the new vegetation. The continuity lies not in the material enswarthment but in the individualizing vital principle. The fleshly body is not transformed, but out of it there issues the original germinal life rehoused in a wholly new and radically different body, built up through the exercise of its inherent architectural powers.

Present psychologists affirm that such apparitions as those of Christ are not isolated phenomena, and that they are not necessarily non-veridical, mere hallucinations of subjective origin, neither that they are instances of distant telepathic control over the senses of the living by the spirits of the dead, but that the dead in their new spiritual bodies may be actually present and actually seen, the veil of invisibility being temporarily drawn aside. The disciples evidently were assured that they actually saw again their living Lord. On this certitude the apostles boldly preached the word and built the church.

There is no fact in personal experience more

universally conceded than that of Saul's conversion, and that it was based on his firm belief in the actuality of his vision of Christ while on the road to Damascus, yet he clearly implies that his experience and that of the other former witnesses were precisely alike,—they and he seeing precisely the same sort of body. These critics affirm that Mark's story of the empty tomb was but a record of an oral tradition of very uncertain origin and of a quite improbable character, that came down to him fifteen or twenty years after Peter and Paul had passed away.

It is not my purpose to follow out the lines of criticism of these authors in which they essay to show the fragmentary character of Mark's account, the interpolations of passages in the other gospels, the discrepancy of texts, the strong improbability of certain recitals, the conflict of testimony, the different stages of growth through which what are apparent myths and legends reached their final form. Suffice it to say that while they discard the historical verity of the resurrection of that identical body of Christ which was once nailed to the cross and afterward laid in the tomb, yet the essential fact of his spiritual resurrection and actual reappearance to his disciples again and again, and their firm conviction and attestation of that fact, these critics do not deny.

That Christ in some way, clothed in some sort of a body, made his actual living presence known

to his followers and thus lifted them out of their despair and inspired them with a courage and a hope that afterward knew no defeat, they seem willing to concede. Whichever interpretation of the closing scenes in Christ's career may be true, a belief that his spirit was in some way most intimately conjoined with the Divine, and that ever since that day it has entered as a conquering force for good into the world's life and will ultimately and gloriously triumph, such a belief, certainly a most priceless possession, is happily left us still.

No wonder infidels are still puzzled to explain how unlearned Galilean fishermen nineteen hundred years ago, when superstitions and most contracted views were rife, could have conceived and pictured with their pens an ideal God-man so masterfully that his acts and sayings as recorded in their pages should be found and universally acknowledged, after the searching test of so many centuries, to be in perfect accord with what would be expected in such a strange and august personage. To fashion such a hero, a hero who should in every exigency maintain the decorum, manifest the spirit, and teach with the wisdom of a God, is, as I have before remarked, an achievement far transcending even the creative genius of a Shakespeare. Christ's last discourse has no parallel in all literature. Rosseau, the French sentimental deist, unhesitatingly affirmed that the original inventor of the gospel history would have been as miraculous a being as its historical sub-

ject. We can but admire the wise discretion of the writer of "Ben-Hur" in rigidly adhering, whenever he introduced Christ into his story, to the severely simple outlines given in the Gospel histories. He seems to have recognized with true artist instinct that the least deviation from the grand original would but mar his work, if not ruin it.

As to Christ's being either an impostor or a lunatic, there is no infidel who has proved so reckless of his own reputation for insight or for candor as to venture on such a plea.

There is but one other answer left us to that great question of the hour, "What think ye of Christ? whose Son is he?" That answer has fallen from the lips and been embodied in the lives of millions of nobly trusting souls in every age since Christ's coming. Faith in his intimate union with the Divine Spirit is the foremost force in the world to-day, quickening, uplifting, and purifying the lives of its mighty multitudes as no other force has done or ever can do. The spirit of scientific inquiry is now abroad in the earth as never before, uncurtaining the past, analyzing and classifying the phenomena of inanimate and animate nature, carrying its torch far into the abysmal depths of personality, discovering the laws that prevail in the departments both of physics and of metaphysics, leaving no subject untested, suffering no sacrifice to check its ardor. This spirit of inquiry, which owes its im-

petus directly or indirectly to this same Christ of history, will, as I confidently believe and have attempted to show, finally establish beyond all controversy that this Christ is indeed that Divine Deliverer to whose advent Nature and Revelation so long pointed with prophetic fingers, and of whose reign of love we have the blessed assurance there shall be no end.

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